Chinese Wushu Series

Soft weapons form one category of the weapons used in Chinese Wushu. They were considered hidden weapons in ancient times and are ideal for self-protection. The nine-section whip and rope dart are two common soft weapons. Apart from giving a brief account of the origin, kinds, uses and development of soft weapons, this book is mainly devoted to the basic knowledge, routines and practice methods of the nine-section whip and rope dart. It is illustrated with more than 200 pictures. It is a good basic textbook for the use of the nine-section whip and rope dart.

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Soft Weapons—Nine-Section Whip and Rope Dart

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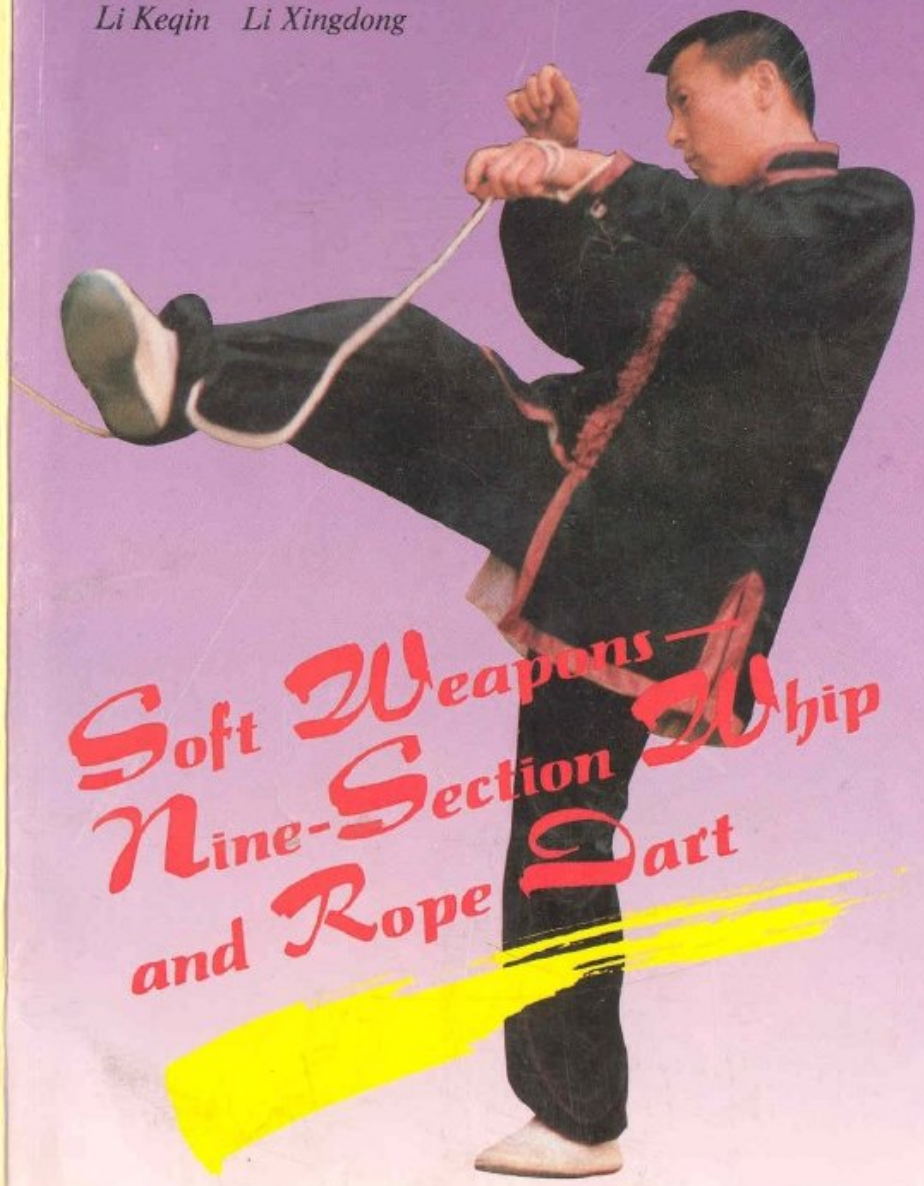
Chinese Wushu Series

Li Keqin Li Xingdong



Soft Weapons—Nine-Section Whip and Rope Dart

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS BEIJING

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Soft Weapons— Nine-Section Whip and Rope Dart

Li Keqin Li Xingdong

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Brief Description of Soft Weapons

Chinese Wushu is a technique for the self-protection of the human body and for attack which is closely connected to Chinese classical philosophy. It combines combat, body building, life enhancement and art into one and is one of the precious heritages of traditional Chinese culture. The combat skills of Wushu for attack and defence have their origin in the hunting skills of primitive society and were rapidly developed in the ancient wars in China.

In primitive times when people lived in groups, they had to rely on the strength of the groups to exist. They combined the human instincts for self-protection and attack with self-defence to fight against wild animals. In this way they gradually acquired and accumulated attack and defence skills. In late primitive society, violent clashes broke out very often among the tribes who fought for economic resources, to kidnap women and for blood revenge. In these clashes hunting tools were first used as battle weapons. Since then, production tools were turned into weapons used in struggles among people and production skills were also gradually turned into military skills. Frequent wars led to the rapid development of military skills and also to the improvement of combat skills. The development of productive forces provided a reliable material foundation for the development of military skills. With the emergence first of bronze weapons and then the use of iron weapons, not only were the quality and performance of the weapons improved but also combat skills for attack and defence were accumulated and developed in battle.

The weapons used in Chinese Wushu evolved from ancient military weapons. The term "18 weapons" has often been used in later generations to describe the multitude of ancient weapons in China. The 18 weapons are bow, crossbow, spear, sword, sabre, lance, shield, axe, battle-axe, halberd, whip, dace, mallet, fork, *shu*, harrow head, lasso and bare hands. They include both long and short weapons, single and double's soft and hard weapons as well as weapons for close and distant combat. They can be used for beating, killing, striking, shooting and blocking. They also have hooks, thorns, sharp points or blades. In China, the phrase "be skillful in using each and every one of the 18 weapons" is used to describe a man of versatile military skills.

The traditional weapons used in Chinese Wushu are capable of killing and injuring people only in close attack or within a distance of not more than three metres. It is difficult to reach opponents who are farther off and therefore not easy to win. Based on the principle of throwing stones or spears to hit animals, people invented the rope dart, meteor hammer, flying talon, *longxu* (dragon's beard) hook, flying hammer, flying ring, fleam, iron lotus, wolf-fang hammer, rope lasso, three-section cudgel, nine-section whip and double talons. They are effective in attacking opponents at greater distances. In battles against superior enemies or when in dangerous situations, the use of soft weapons helped to solve urgent problems, turn things to the better and even transform defeat into victory. As they were easily carried, hidden and released they were called hidden weapons in ancient China.

Soft weapons have a long history. As early as the middle period of the Old Stone Age, people living in Dingcun Village along the Fenhe River in the present province of Shanxi, north China, used a rattan rope tied to a stone ball

to throw at animals and tie up their limbs in hunting. This "flying stone ball" was later developed into the meteor hammer. The rope dart is similar to the stone fish dart and bone fish fork used in the early and middle periods of the Old Stone Age, both of which were tied to a rope. After it was thrown out the rope was pulled back. This is how the rope dart was developed from the stone fish dart.

With the advent of war, hunting tools were developed into military weapons. The meteor hammer was used as a weapon on the battle field. During the Period of the Warring States (475-221 BC), the meteor hammer was used with both hands to attack an opponent. Many famous generals during the Tang and Song dynasties used to attack their opponents with the flying hammer (meteor hammer). Fu Yangyu, one of the generals in the Song Dynasty, was known for using his flying hammer to defeat his enemy.

The nine-section whip, regarded as a "powerful hidden weapon," was first used on the battlefield during the Jin Dynasty (265-420). Holding the handle, the user throws it out to hit, whip, hook or bind the opponent. It is hard to resist and a skillful user can use it to overcome either sword or sabre.

The flying talon was first seen in the Sui Dynasty (581-618) but it was not used by many people. In the Song Dynasty, a person called Li Quan was known for his invincible use of an iron spear. Whenever he went to the battlefield, he was accompanied by his wife Yang who was a specialist both with the spear and with the flying talon which she used to catch an opponent. His wife once said to some people: "I have dominated the country for 20 years with my spear and talon without meeting a serious enemy." The *longxu* hook was invented in the Song Dynasty (960-1279) as a soft weapon for catching an opponent.

In the period of Emperor Zhen Zong of the Song Dynasty when the troops of the Liao State planned to attack Chanzhou (the west of present-day Qingfeng of Henan Province), a general named Chen of the Song Dynasty raided the Liao camp on horseback and killed many troops. The commander of the Liao troops ran away. General Chen went after him and using his *longxu* hook caught him alive. Many troops of his army later learned the practice of the hook. The hook is still practised to this day by martial artists in Shanxi and Shaanxi provinces.

The long *shaozi* cudgel was called chained rods in the Song Dynasty. It is made of a long cudgel and a short cudgel linked by an iron chain. When using it, hold the long cudgel and swing it so as to hit the opponent with the short cudgel which will carry a powerful force. It was recorded in an ancient book that this instrument was used in the Qi State to thresh wheat as early as the seventh century before Christ. During the reign of Emperor Ren Zong (1041-1048) of the Song Dynasty, it was used as a military weapon on the battlefield. The long cudgel was shortened to make it easier to carry. Based on the chained cudgel, the long cudgel was linked with two short rods. It was later developed into the three-section cudgel.

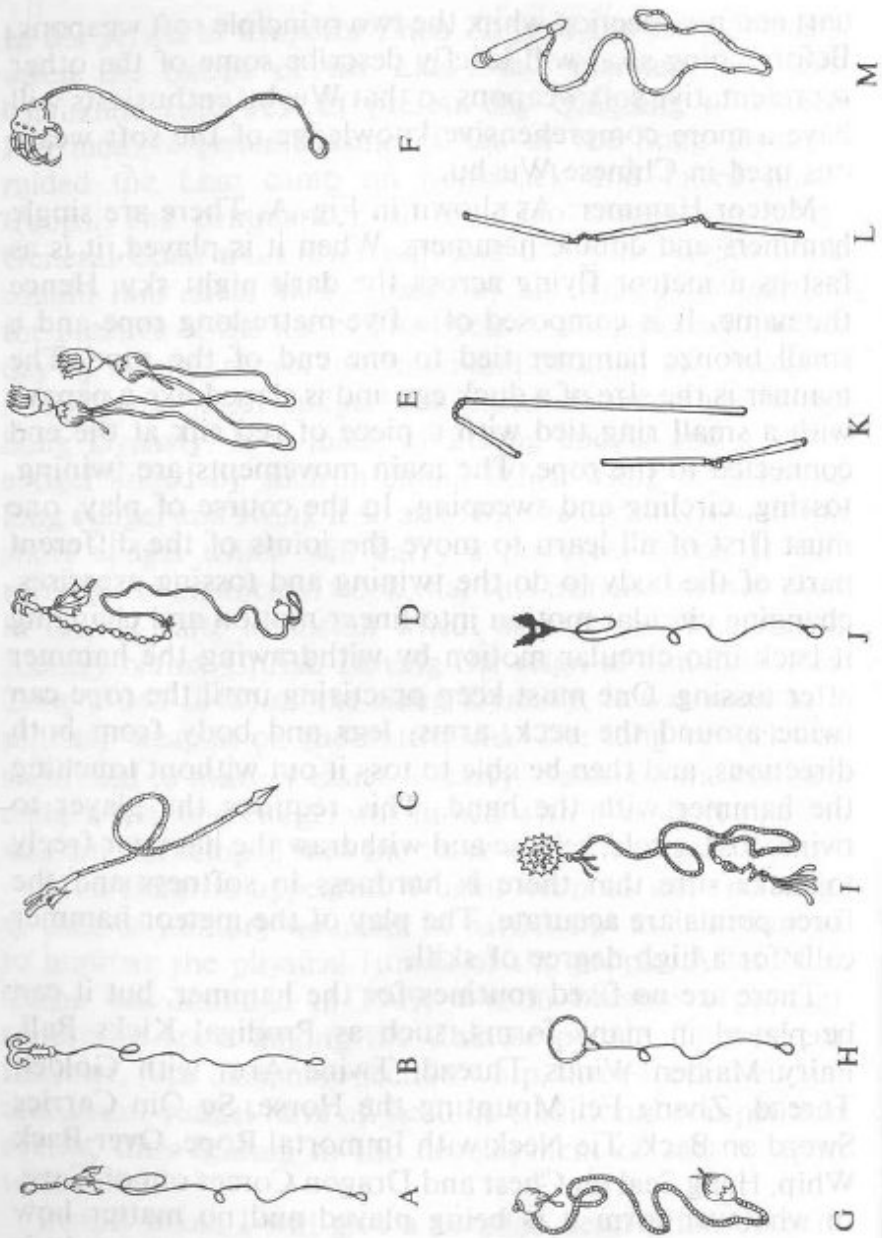
After firearms appeared, Wushu weapons were no longer used as military weapons in battles but as instruments to improve the physical fitness of the people. After New China was founded in 1949, Wushu became a popular traditional sport among the Chinese people. The meteor hammer, rope dart, nine-section whip, three-section cudgel and *shaozi* cudgel have all become traditional competition events, thus leading to the development of soft weapon techniques.

In this book, I will give a detailed description of both the basic knowledge and practice methods for the rope

dart and nine-section whip, the two principle soft weapons. Before doing so, I will briefly describe some of the other representative soft weapons so that Wushu enthusiasts will have a more comprehensive knowledge of the soft weapons used in Chinese Wushu.

Meteor Hammer: As shown in Fig. A. There are single hammers and double hammers. When it is played, it is as fast as a meteor flying across the dark night sky. Hence the name. It is composed of a five-metre-long rope and a small bronze hammer tied to one end of the rope. The manner is the size of a duck egg and is slaped like a papaya with a small ring tied with a piece of red silk at the end connected to the rope. The main movements are twining, tossing, circling and sweeping. In the course of play, one must first of all learn to move the joints of the different parts of the body to do the twining and tossing exercises, changing circular motion into linear motion and changing it back into circular motion by withdrawing the hammer after tossing. One must keep practising until the rope can twine around the neck, arms, legs and body from both directions, and then be able to toss it out without touching the hammer with the hand. This requires the player to twine, toss, circle, release and withdraw the hammer freely to make sure that there is hardness in softness and the force points are accurate. The play of the meteor hammer calls for a high degree of skill.

There are no fixed routines for the hammer, but it can be played in many forms, such as Prodigal Kicks Ball, Fairy Maiden Winds Thread, Twine Arm with Golden Thread, Zhang Fei Mounting the Horse, Su Qin Carries Sword on Back, Tie Neck with Immortal Rope, Over-Back Whip, Hang Seal on Chest and Dragon Comes out of Cave. In whatever form it is being played and no matter how many times the rope ties round, the player can untie it



successfully and strike back. This is truly a unique skills of Chinese Wushu.

Longxu (Dragon Beard) Hook: As shown in Figure B. This is a hidden weapon for capturing an opponent. It has evolved from the long-handled hook and tiger-head hook. The long-handled hook has a hard handle while the tiger-head hook has a short handle. The hook itself has sharp blades on both sides like a sword head.

The weapon is made of forged steel. It is 33 mm long and its rear part is shaped in a semi-circle with an iron ring in the middle where the rope is tied at one end. At the front end of the semi-circle are two bent spear-heads, 20 mm apart. There are sharp teeth on the outer sides of the heads which are bent outside into hooks slightly similar to the tiger's head hook. The end of the hook is about 7 mm long and the hook point is very sharp with many sharp teeth on all sides. The whole body is flat enough to be held in the hand. The soft rope is about 10 metres long. Its front end is tied to the ring and the rear end is tied to the wrist in a knot.

The two bent heads of the *longxu* hook are mainly used to attack the opponent, with the teeth used as a supplementary aid. The secret for the release of its power is summarized two words: block and draw. Because it is tied with a soft rope, it cannot be used like the hard weapons. As the hooks are peculiar, neither can it be used like the hammer and talon. Only the blocking method is applicable. After hitting the target, the player of the hook uses his drawing power to catch the opponent.

Dragon Head Stick: As shown in Figure C. It is composed of a rope the length of the arms of the player which is enclosed in metal tube of the same length with a dragon's head carved from metal at one end and a steel awl at the other. When playing this weapon, the player holds

the front end of the dragon's head in one hand and the steel awl in the other. As the rope can be released, drawn back, twined and wound it has the characteristics of a soft weapon. It can be brandished with a whistling noise, thrown to attack an opponent at precise force points, waved like a steel staff and twined like a golden snake. Moreover, it can also be used like a double dagger from among the short weapons for stabbing, piercing, thrusting and pounding. The player can play it freely with both hands in all directions and use it to hit an opponent either at a distance or close at hand.

The stick was popular among the folk very early, but at that time the rope was not enclosed in a metal tube. Only a rope was used to join the dragon's head to the steel awl. Some people used sticks with hard steel needles on the dragon's head as well as short arrows which they hid in their hands and sleeves.

Flying Hook: As shown in Figure D. It was one of the rarer soft weapons in ancient China. It is made of pure iron and looks like the foot of an owl's, therefore it was also called iron owl foot. The hook has both long and bent points and edges which are sharpened. It is joined to an iron chain which is again tied with a hemp rope. It can be used for hooking, catching and holding. When it is thrown into a group of people, two people are caught at the same time.

Double Flying Forks: As shown in Figure E. It is one of the rarest soft weapons in ancient China and made of pure iron. It resembles the claws of an eagle. The five fingers are joined together and the nails are flexible. They are tied together by two long ropes. This weapon is used for catching, holding and pulling. When it hits the opponent, the rope is pulled quickly so that the sharp points of the claw pierce the flesh. Whoever uses this weapon

must be very strong.

Flying Talon: As shown in Figure F. It is composed of a rope and a talon. The talon is made of iron and is entirely the same as the human hand but the face of the talon palm is shorter than that of the human palm. Except for the thumb, each of the other fingers has three phalanxes. The end of the first phalanx is as sharp as a cock spur. There is a small but flexible device fitted to the connecting part of each phalanx which enables all the phalanxes to move freely. There are five holes on the upper end of the palm where the wearer's fingers are inserted. In the middle of the palm is a semi-circular iron piece. An iron ring is inserted at the rear part of the palm and into the iron piece. This is the central hub of the mechanism which controls the extension and flexion of the claws. The small device at each phalanx is also linked by a string to the main rope and the rear part of the ring is tied with a soft rope. At the rear end of the rope is a loop where the wrist is placed. When the talon is thrown at an opponent, the claws are sharp enough to injure him. If the user pulls the ring powerfully and all the small devices work, the claws cut into the flesh like the fingers of the hand and it is very difficult for the opponent to shake it off.

Only one hand is used to hold the rope and operate the weapon. This is why a loop has to be put around the wrist. When operating the talon, one has to raise it to the rear powerfully to accumulate the wrist power and at the same time open the claws fully. After throwing it and hitting the target, pull it back forcefully to get what you want.

Cotton Rope Lasso: As shown in Figure G. This is made of very fine cotton yarn. The rope is as thick as the thumb and is four metres long. There are knotted balls the size of hen's eggs at both ends of the rope and the knotted balls are attached with seven millimetre long cotton cord tassels.

There are also lassos made of plaited brocade and cock claw lassos, but they are both derived from the cotton lasso.

If the enemy comes on foot, the lasso is thrown onto the ground to twine around his legs and pull him down. If the enemy comes on horse, it should be used so as to catch him around his waist and thus pull him off the horse. If you want to kill the enemy, you catch the lasso around his neck and then run wild dragging him behind. In short, the lasso is used to pull the enemy down and you have to be quick to do it well. If you are a bit slow, the lasso will be grabbed by the enemy and this is very dangerous.

There is an old saying: "It is easy to break steel, but difficult to break the water." In using soft weapons you have to exert force and turn a light thing into a steel rod. Only then can you face your enemy. The cotton lasso is the lightest among the soft weapons and it is therefore more difficult to practise it than the other soft weapons. In playing the cotton lasso, the practitioner is required to move the weapon quickly and flexibly, hit the opponent with accuracy, bind the opponent with force, catch the opponent successfully, block attacks with no difficulty and pull the weapon back easily.

Brocade Lasso: As shown in Figure H. This is a soft weapon for catching people and is plaited with brocade. After the brocade lasso is finished, first choose one end and tie it to a bronze slip ring. Put the other end of the rope through the ring to make a noose and then form the other end into another noose through which a hand can be put to tie the wrist so that the rope will not slip off the hand when force is exerted. The technique is mainly to throw the lasso out to noose the opponent.

Wolf-fang Hammer: As shown in Figure I. This is made of a hammer and a rope. The hammer is round and

covered with numerous sharp iron nails three millimetres long. The nails look like the fangs of a wolf, hence the name. At the rear part of the hammer is a fixed ring which is used for tying the rope and for holding the hammer before throwing it. The size of the hammer is decided by the wrist power of the user, about one to four kilogrammes. At the other end of the rope is a wrist noose. In holding the hammer, put the four fingers into the ring, use the thumb to press it against the other fingers tightly and then raise it. When throwing the hammer, first raise it to shoulder level in front of the face, then turn the wrist powerfully upward to bring the hammer upright, bend the wrist downward and throw the hammer out using the power of the arm. The hammer attacks entirely by the fangs. If anyone is hit, the flesh becomes a honeycomb.

Iron Lotus: As shown in Figure J. This is a throwing weapon tied with a rope. It is made of a lotus and a rope. The iron lotus is made of thin iron pieces cut into the shape of lotus petals riveted together and tied with a rope. When it is thrown out, the petals open to strike the opponent.

Practice method: Hold the rope in the left hand and the iron lotus in the right. First throw the lotus and then release the rope quickly but evenly to maintain the flying speed of the louts. It hits the target very accurately.

Shaozi Cudgel: As shown in Figure K. The *shaozi* cudgel is divided into two categories: the long *shaozi* cudgel and the hand *shaozi* cudgel. The long *shaozi* cudgel is made of two sections, a long one and a short one linked together by an iron ring. The front section is 40-50 millimetres long and the rear section is 140-150 millimetres long. The long *shaozi* cudgel is used for swinging, hacking, thrusting, tilting, moving in figure eight patterns, shaking and parrying. In actual battles, it is used for attack and

defence through shaking and parrying movements. In single practice it is used for displaying the figure eight pattern. The basic exercises for the long *shaozi* cudgel include: Strike the head from above, strike the legs from below, thrust the back from behind and part the wild horse's mane from both directions.

The hand *shaozi* cudgel is a shortened version of the long *shaozi* cudgel. It is again divided into single-handed *shaozi* and double-handed *shaozi*.

Three-section Cudgel: As shown in Figure L. The three-section cudgel is also called the three-section staff. It is made of three short cudgels of the same length linked together with iron rings. The whole length of the cudgel is the distance from the ground to the tip of the finger with the arm extended over the head. Its techniques include hacking, pointing, tilting, poking, sweeping, brandishing, parrying, blocking, winding, waving like clouds and thrusting. It can be used either as a long cudgel or as a sabre and short staff.

When playing the three-section cudgel, use one hand or both hands to hold the first section, the second section or the third section. The basic cudgel techniques combined with footwork, foot techniques, leg techniques, body techniques, jumps, leaps and tumbling are the basic movements in the routines called Figure Eight, Dragon Waves Its Tail, Fish Waves Its Tail, Horizontal Strike at Waist Level and Roll on Ground. Softness dwells in hardness, handness and softness are combined and ferocity is combined with quickness. These are some of the characteristics of the three-section cudgel.

"*Baga*": As shown in Figure M. This is a soft weapon of the Tibetan nationality. It is made of a club and a leather rope. The club can be either round or square, with a diameter of 3-4 cm. At the end of the club is a 10-12 cm

long and 2.5-2.7 cm thick handle made of hard wood. The leather rope is about 3 metres long. It is made with elaborate care and is soft and firm. It is tied to the end of the club handle. The other end of the rope is knotted into a noose. The length and thickness of the club vary, depending on the age, height and physical strength of the practitioner. The club used for adult is generally 66 cm.

The *baga* is used for both softness and hardness, and it can be long or short. One can use it for close or distant attack. By holding the handle in one hand and putting the noose around the right hand, one can use either the club or the leather rope depending on the distance of the enemy. For close attack one can use the club. For distant attack one can hold the rope and throw the club out, pull it back quickly after throwing and throw it again. If the rope is used properly, one can also use it to entangle the weapon used by the opponent. If one uses it against a wild beast in deep forests, the *baga* is even better than a sabre. *Baga* techniques are different from club and rope techniques. Club techniques include beating, thrusting, hacking and tilting while techniques for the rope include whipping, lassoing, tying and wringing. The *baga* can be used both on the plain or in the mountains. It is easy to make and carry. It is a good hidden weapon for the Tibetan people who wear long robes.

Nine-Section Whip

The nine-section whip is one of the soft weapons used in Chinese Wushu and is therefore a traditional event. It is good for improving the basic qualities of the human body, training the speed of response of the cerebral cortex and raising the ability of the nervous system to control muscle groups. It helps to cultivate and temper one's bravery, tenacity and resolution.

1. Origin

The nine-section whip is divided into single whip and double whip, soft whip and hard whip. It is recorded in historical books that the whip was first used in the Jin Dynasty (the third century). The soft whip was described as a "powerful hidden weapon." Even if it hits lightly, it causes a serious wound and is therefore difficult to resist. "Moreover, it can be used for hitting, whipping, hooking and binding. A skillful user can use it better than the sabre or sword. When it hits an opponent, it twines around his neck and pulls him down." (See *The History of Chinese Weapons* by Zhou Wei)

In north China, the soft whip is again divided into seven-section whip, nine-section whip, 11-section whip and 13-section whip. But they are generally called nine-section whip. It is very easy to carry: hide it by the waist or carry it in the hand. It is a hidden weapon which is difficult to master.

2. Structure

The nine-section whip consists of a head in front and a handle at the back with several sections between them.

They are all made of steel (or iron) and linked by iron rings (Fig. 2-1). It can be held in the hand but becomes a long staff when it is thrown out. The length of the whip should be: The practitioner stands erect holding the handle in the right hand with the arm raised horizontally to the right side. The hanging whip end should be slightly off the ground (Fig. 2-2). Its weight depends on the arm power of the practitioner and it should be adjusted accordingly. Generally speaking, one uses a heavy whip to temper the arm's power and a light one to temper speed and coordination. In modern Wushu routines, a coloured ribbon is tied both at the head and the handle to increase the atmosphere of competition or demonstration.

3. Technical Features

The nine-section whip has all the characteristic features of soft weapons but it can also twine and circle as freely as one wishes. It is therefore, more flexible than the other soft weapons. Technically speaking, it's use is described as "when you strike lengthwise it hits a straight line, when you strike crosswise it sweeps a group. No matter how you use it there is no limit to its power." When the whip is used to deal with an enemy, it should be "used like a rope to twine him skilfully and accurately." "Twining" not only means that the practitioner can execute the twining movements accurately, but more importantly that he is very capable of twining around the neck, hands or feet of the opponent. Once you succeed, you can quickly pull him back. When the opponent hesitates, advance quickly and overcome him. In actual battles, you should achieve hardness in softness. When it is soft, it is like a rope and can hook or bind the opponent's weapon. When it is hard, it is like an iron cudgel and you can use the whip head to strike the vital parts of the opponent. If it is used properly, it can

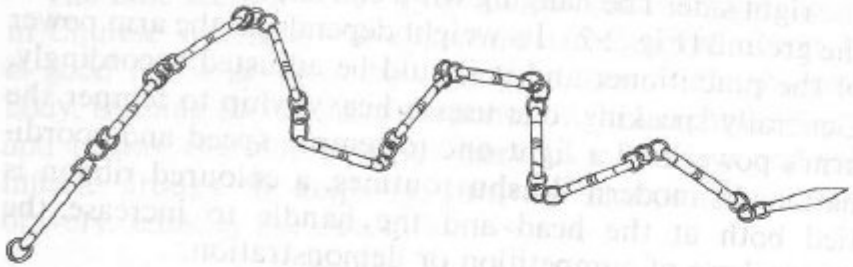


Fig. 2-1

Fig. 2-2

hit the target both at close range and at a distance. The whip head has a special striking power. When the opponent is defending, you can use it to strike him over the head or crosswise at the waist making it difficult for him to defend against. So many experts say: "When it is brandished, it looks like a turning wheel; and when it is waved, it looks like a steel cudgel."

There is a saying in Chinese Wushu circles: "Meteor calls for skill while the whip requires smooth play." "Smooth" here means that the whip must move along a circular line to increase the momentum of the whip head and thereby increase its impact. Its special techniques are mainly twining and winding. They are generally called "whip play." This plus circling, striking, sweeping, tilting and upper parry form the whole set of whip exercises. In the course of play, the performer is required to display his skills clearly, bravely and quickly along with his steady footwork. All movements must be clear and clean. The whip moves as the body turns and changes with the footwork. The whipping stance calls for "one step one movement, one movement one change, one change one pattern, every movement forms a pattern." The technical movements are interlocked, changeable and unpredictable. During the play, the whip twines around the arm or the neck, hangs over the shoulder, sweeps to the legs, rises into the air or dances near the body. The movements are varied and graceful but the stances are strict. All the movements are displayed quickly. When the weapon is pulled back it becomes a big mass, when it is released it strikes a large group of people; when it is pulled back it is like a worm, when it is released it is like a dragon. When it is pulled back it looks like a mouse, but when it is released it is like a tiger. Whipping exercises help to improve physical fitness but also resist violence. It is Wushu but it is also art.

In practising the routines, the main technical features of the nine-section whip are quickness and smoothness. It does not have as many showings, pauses and transitions in rhythm as the play of hard weapons like sabre, spear, sword and cudgel; nor does it have as many rises and falls as the sea waves in the routines of the *Chang Quan*. That would undermine the completeness and continuity of the technical movements of the nine-section whip. There is a saying in Chinese Wushu: "Single whip depends on walking." It shows that the nine-section whip is moved when the performer stands erect and walks.

The technical movements of the nine-section whip are completed by moving the feet, twisting and turning the waist and using the body to move the whip. During practice the performer moves (advances, retreats and moves to the left or right) in the same direction as the whip moves to ensure that the "whip is close to the body and the step is steady," and that the "whip moves straight and the body is used to guide the movement of the whip."

4. Methods of Movement

The methods of movement of the nine-section whip are mainly twining, circling, sweeping, parrying, tossing and the figure eight. With the moving arm as the force point, use the wrist, shoulder, neck, waist and legs as support points to execute turning, carrying, poking and striking movements for acceleration. You can also change the axis and direction of the circular movement of the whip.

"Twining" is a portial wrapping movement of the whip executed in various forms around different parts of the human body such as the hands, elbows, shoulders, neck, waist and legs.

"Circling" is to move the whip quickly in a vertical circle.

"Sweeping" is to move and sweep the whip in a horizontal circle.

"Parrying" is to apply power on the quickly moving whip (or section) at the supporting point to change the direction of the moving whip.

"Tossing" is to toss the turning whip into the air, using the hand to catch it when it falls down for a connection with the following movements.

"Figure eight" is to move the whip in a figure-eight in one hand or in both hands. Moving the whip in one hand is to move the whip in vertical circles in front of or behind the body. Moving the whip in both hands is to move the whip in vertical circles on both sides of the body.

From the above-described movements, it can be seen that the rules for the movement of the nine-section whip revolve around the use of the whip handle as the centre (axis) of the circle and the execution of various circular twining movements around different parts of the body. On the basis of the rules for the movement of the nine-section whip, its forms of movement can be divided into two categories:

1) Vertical Circular Movement

"Swinging the whip in a vertical circle" is a generalization of the rules of movement of the nine-section whip. Namely, the whip moves like a wheel turning in a vertical circle. The moving orbit of the whip head forms a line perpendicular to the ground. The movements include Elbow Whip, Shoulder and Back Whip, Horse Mounting Whip and Neck Twining Whip. Vertical circular movement is the clearest example of the turning speed of the nine-section whip. This is because the vertical circular movement is easy to achieve the greatest centrifugal force. Moreover, the speed changes quickly in the course of the movement and the least centrifugal

force is lost. As the orbit of the vertical circular movement is perpendicular to the ground, it produces a strong sense of three dimensions while the whip moves at high speed. During competitions or demonstrations, illuminated lights and the noises of the colorful ribbons make people feel as if a car wheel is turning. Vertical circular movement constitutes a large percentage of the routines of the nine-section whip (generally about 70-80%). Therefore, a skillful grasp of vertical circular movement is of special importance in improving the execution of the routines of the nine-section whip. Moreover, whether the technical movement of the whole set of exercises can achieve the desired speed depends on the quality of execution of the vertical circular movement.

2) Horizontal Circular Movement

"Sweep horizontally like a millstone" is the general description of the technical movements belonging to the category of horizontal circular movement of the nine-section whip. In horizontal circular movement the moving orbit of the whip is parallel to the ground. It looks like a turning millstone. Its technical movements include Sweeping Whip with Butterfly and Sweeping Whip with Turning Body.

Horizontal circular movement does not produce the same strong sense of three dimensions as vertical circular movement and is not used as often as the vertical. But it serves as a connection between the different movements in the routines of the nine-section whip. Its attacking force is irresistible. Skillful use of horizontal circular movement helps make all the movements in the whole routine continuous and flowing.

One of the techniques in the technical system of the nine-section whip is called Lying Whip. In a certain sense

it belongs to the horizontal circular movements. The moving line of the Lying Whip is also parallel to the ground but it has a much greater degree of difficulty than the technical movements of the Sweeping Whip with Turning Body. It calls for excellent coordination among the different parts of the body and a high level of skill. The Lying Whip requires the performer to lie on the ground while executing the movements of the whip parallel and close to the ground and even under the body. Therefore, the Lying Whip requires the performer to move the whip quickly and at the same time quickly lift the body off the ground when the whip moves under the body so that the moving whip can pass under it smoothly.

In modern Wushu routines, Lying Whip techniques include forward sweeping, backward sweeping, sitting whip and lying whip with turning body.

3) Oblique Circular Movement

Oblique circular movement is a whipping movement which lies between vertical circular movement and horizontal circular movement. The moving line of the whip is oblique to the standing human body. In the technical movement called Carrying Whip on Back, the whip is moved from the right side of the body across the back obliquely to the upper side of the left shoulder. The execution of this whipping movement requires that the whip be moved to the desired position accurately, the moving speed be strictly controlled and the connection with the following movement be well-timed.

Although the above-described movement is not included in the routines described in this book, a few words on it are needed so that the readers will have a general idea about it in order to learn and grasp advanced routines of the nine-section whip.

5. Relationship Between Speed and Force Points

The play of the nine-section whip is an exercise in the formation of various circles with the axis changing as the whip handle is moved at the centre of the circle. In these movements the handle of the nine-section whip is the main axle. All whip movement figures are formed based on the swinging of the arm holding the whip with various parts of the body as fulcrums. This is combined with turning, carrying, moving and beating. The other hand is employed as an aid to increase motive power and speed and to change the centre of the circle and direction of motion. Therefore, the criteria for judging the level of play of the nine-section whip are whether the axis can be correctly grasped and the speed of its movement be properly controlled. In competitions or demonstrations, many outstanding athletes display astonishing speed of movement with the whip.

In the play of the nine-section whip, the axis of the whip is constantly changed to shorten or extend the radius of the circular movement and constantly change its speed. It is in the course of these changes that speed is achieved. It is well known that when an object moves in a vertical or horizontal circle, the longer the object, the more slowly it moves and the shorter the object, the more quickly it moves. Radius is inversely proportional to speed: in other words, the longer the radius, the lower the speed; the shorter the radius, the higher the speed. We can see this in how the nine-section whip is moved around the neck. When moving the whip around the neck, the axis of the whip is at the neck and therefore the radius of its movement is shorter. Thus the speed of the whip moving around the neck twice is apparently greater than moving it once. The level of play of the whip lies in the variety of changes of axis, the connection between the different whipping movements and the change of the speed.

In moving the whip, the force point is at the axis. As the axis changes from movement to movement, the force point also changes. Therefore all parts of the body can exert force on the whip during practice, but at the proper time and to the proper degree. For example, when doing the Horse Mounting Whip exercise, the axis of the whip is shifted to the inner side of the thigh. At this time the thigh should properly be pressed down to exert force on the whip. If it is not well timed the whip will twine around the thigh. Thus to exert proper force on the whip when the radius of movement becomes shorter or longer is an important part of the play of the whip. It can be seen that whether the constantly changing axis can be properly used and force applied to the whip to the proper extent are the keys to whether the speed of play of the whip is up to the desired level. Some practitioners fail to grasp the force points in the quick changes of axis and find this or that part of their body entwined in the whip. They should practise hard and spend more time in learning to grasp the relationship between the force points of the whip and the speed of motion.

6. Practice Methods

The play of the whip should proceed according to these principles: from simple to complicated, from easy to difficult and first slowly and then quickly.

Before playing the whip, a practitioner should first have a correct understanding of the essential points of the technical movements to be executed. In the course of play, he must move the whip at a proper speed. If the speed is too slow, the force will not reach the whip head, the whip will bend or coil and the technical movement will not be well executed. Meth-

ods of practice are different for soft weapons and hard weapons. When playing hard weapons one can stop at transitions to understand the methods and essential points of the technical movements. But soft weapons call for execution of movements without interruption. Therefore, in playing the nine-section whip the player should first of all have a clear understanding of the line of movement for the technical movement to be executed, the direction of the whip's circling, the location of the body, the parts of the body to be contacted by the whip during the play, the directions to turn the body and the timing for changes in the whip. He should then build up a clear image in the mind of what is to be done. Beginners can practise technical movements step by step so as to lay a good foundation for the play of the whole set of routines.

The steps for practice of the technical movements of the whip are as follows:

1. Whip holds. Forehand hold (Fig. 6-1, with the connection between the handle and the whip between the thumb and the forefinger). Backhand hold (Fig. 6-2, with the connection towards the little finger). In other words, there is a distinction between the positive handle (forehand hold) and negative handle (backhand hold). The positive handle is flexible while the negative handle is powerful, so each handle has its own strong point. The forehand hold is used in this set of exercises. The whip handle should be held flexibly but firmly. Beginners can choose either method.

2. Whip circling. Whip circling is a whipping exercise of vertical circular movement done while the player stands erect. In practising the whip the player should stand close to a wall with the hand holding the whip towards the wall. While circling the whip, the player must move the whip perpendicular to the ground but not allow it to touch the

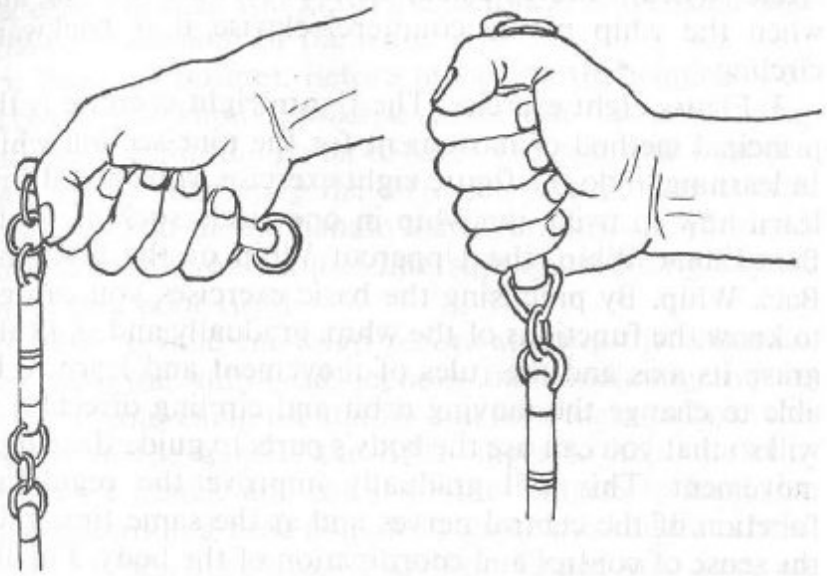


Fig. 6-1 Fig. 6-2

wall. The practice should proceed from slow to quick, becoming gradually faster. In whip circling, stress is laid on the wrist movement. The forearm should not be extended or the circumference will be larger making the speed slower and the axis of the whip uncontrollable. Moreover, the elbow joint should not be turned out. The whip is circled forward and backward, on the right and on the left side of the body, in front of the body and along each side of the body.

Circling direction: Stand with your face to the east and feet apart, one ahead of the other. Hold the whip in the right hand and circle the whip to form a vertical circle. When the whip moves clockwise it is forward circling and when the whip moves counterclockwise it is backward circling. Stand with your face to the south and feet apart.

Hold the whip in the right hand and move it in a vertical circle. When it moves clockwise it is forward circling and when the whip moves counterclockwise it is backward circling.

3. Figure eight exercise. The figure eight exercise is the principal method of movement for the nine-section whip. In learning to do the figure eight exercise, you should first learn how to twine the whip in one circle such as in the Bent-Elbow Whip, the Uppercut Whip or the Over-the-Back Whip. By practising the basic exercises you can get to know the functions of the whip, gradually and skillfully grasp its axis and the rules of movement and learn to be able to change the moving orbit and circling direction at will so that you can use the body's parts to guide the whip's movement. This will gradually improve the regulating function of the central nerves and at the same time raise the sense of control and coordination of the body. Finally, you will learn to grasp the skills in forming various figures by circling the whip.

4. Combinations. After learning the single exercises as described in 3, continue to learn combinations of the single exercises. At the beginning combine two or three simple singles: for example, Circling—Bent-Elbow Whip—Over-Back Whip with Body Turn. The main purpose of learning the combinations is to get familiar with the rules of combining singles and to grasp the proper timing for connection of movements. After learning to combine singles, continue to learn to combine singles with complicated figures, such as Circling—Carry Whip on Back, and Circling—Twining Neck Whip. Through repeated practice, you will be able to combine the various whip exercises as freely as you like. During practice, you should correctly handle the axis of movement of the nine-section whip and properly control its speed. In practising the various exercises, the speed should be slow at the beginning becoming gradually faster as you grasp the technical movements and learn the behaviour of the whip.

5. Practice routines. Before practising the whole set of routines, you should practise them one by one. After grasping one routine go on to learn the next and then the whole set by combining the different parts. In the course of practice you should handle the rhythms of the play and finish the whole set without interruption, avoiding a good start with a poor finish.

6. How to hold the whip before starting the routines. First grasp the whip head, sections and handle together in the right hand using the thumb and forefinger to hold the forepart of the handle, the little finger to hold the rear part of the handle and the two other fingers to hold the whip sections and head (Fig. 6-3). Since the handle is held by the thumb, forefinger and little finger you have to loosen the two other fingers and throw the whip out powerfully when releasing the whip and then the whip will

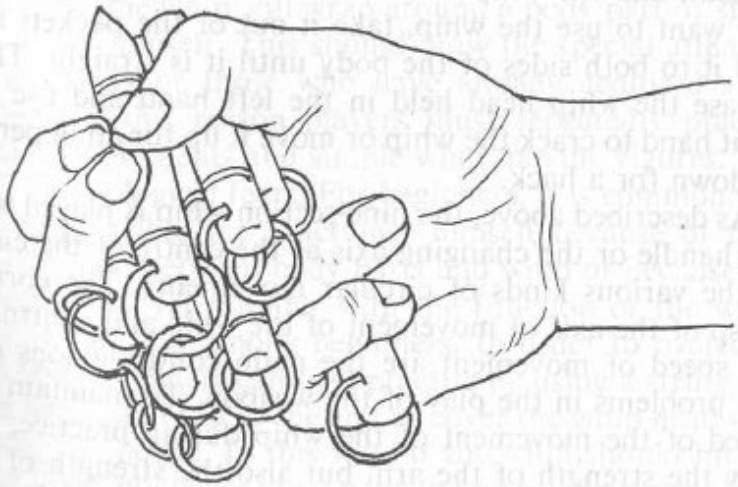


Fig. 6-3

be fully open. Otherwise, the whole whip will not open or will fly out and hurt people.

7. How to take back the whip after finishing the routines. First use the wrist's power to push the handle up so that the head flies up together with the sections from below or flies forward from behind. When the whip head comes above the head in front of the body, with an angle of about 45 degrees with the body immediately turn the wrist out and over so that the palm faces up. Then pull the handle so that the whip returns and catch it in the hand. When using the wrist to push the handle up make sure that the head, sections and handle form a straight line and that none of the sections is bent or the sections will not be able to be taken back into the hand section by section.

8. How to carry the whip. First take the middle section of the whip and insert it in the back part of the waist belt from below. Then take the whip head in the left hand and the handle in the right along with the connecting sections and put them in the trousers pockets. Put on your jacket or coat, and the whip will be hidden for carrying. When you want to use the whip, take it out of the pockets and pull it to both sides of the body until it is straight. Then release the whip head held in the left hand and use the right hand to crack the whip or move it up for an uppercut or down for a hack.

As described above, the nine-section whip is played with the handle or the changing axis as the centre of the circle in the various kinds of circular movements. The correct grasp of the axis of movement of the whip and control of the speed of movement are the main contradictions and key problems in the play of the weapon. To maintain the speed of the movement of the whip during practice, not only the strength of the arm but also the strength of the waist and abdomen should be used. Both the waist and

abdomen are sources of strength. Whether the strength of the waist and abdomen can be correctly used is not only a criterion for the quality of the play of Chinese boxing but is also a manifestation of the standard of play of the whip in the course of practice.

To practise whip speed, you can use the method of practising light and heavy weapons together. First use heavy weapons and then light weapons. This will help you to increase the speed of playing the whip.

7. Common Problems and Solutions

1. Poor coordination between body and weapon. Like other weapons, the play of the nine-section whip calls for good coordination between body parts and weapon, but the whip and other soft weapons call for especially good coordination. When there is poor coordination between body parts and other weapons the impression is only that the technical movements are not well done or look awkward; but if there is poor coordination between body parts and whip, the whip will wrap around a body part or strike the player himself. This should draw the special attention of beginners or those who have already acquired some skills. For this reason players must repeatedly practise circling movements and simple whip moving figures.

2. Psychological fears. For beginners, it is common that the whip strikes the practioner himself because of poor coordination between body parts and whip or because the player is not yet familiar with the function of the whip. This causes fear among beginners. In order to overcome this fear, beginners can first practise by using a string and tie a small sand bag to the end or cover the whip head with a layer of sponge. In this way, if the whip should hit the body it will not cause great pain and no psychological fears will arise. Because of fear and the instinctive response of

the human body it is quite possible to flinch when executing technical movements. If this tendency is not corrected in time and these distorted movements become habitual, there will be a flinch whenever this movement is executed and the movement may even be interrupted. This is not good for achieving a grasp of the technical methods of the whip. When the psychological fear of being hit is eliminated and the function of the whip becomes well knwon, practice the whip itself and you will get twice the result with half the effort.

3. The bent whip is not round. For beginners, the most common phenomenon is that the bent whip does not make a circle. To ensure that the whip moves smoothly in completely round circles, it is necessary to increase the moving speed of the whip. According to the characteristics of soft weapons and the principles of mechnics, the faster the speed the more circular the motion of the whip. This is because there is centrifugal force when the whip moves. By applying power at the force point, the force point moves along the sections to the head. After the head develops momentum, it moves in the direction that the power is applied to the axis and produces centrifugal force as it is drawn through the sections. The faster the head of the whip moves, the greater the centrifugal force while at the same time the sections of the whip are pulled straight. If the speed is too slow, the centrifugal force will be too small. The force point will not reach the head and the whip will be bent. By using momentum, you can make the handle of the nine-section whip into an axis and thereby move the force point to the head. This helps to solve the problem of the bent whip.

4. The whip is not close to the body. In the play of the nine-section whip, the key is to ensure that the whip is close to the body no matter how it moves. For beginners,

the best way is to practise the circling exercise close to a wall. The method: Stand erect with feet 33 cm from the wall, the hand holding the handle near the wall and repeatedly do the exercises of circling and Bent-Elbow Whip being careful not to let the whip head touch the body, the ground or the wall.

5. Timing for the transfer between movements is not good. Beginners often find themselves caught by the fast moving whip merely because they fail to grasp the proper timing for transfer from one movement to another. The solution is: In the course of fast circling, the timing for the transfer from movement to movement should be based mainly on the sense of the muscles of the body part which the whip reaches. Eyesight should be secondary. If the transfer is executed when you see the whip coming with your eyes it is already too late and you will be caught by the whip. Therefore, there must be some proper preparation time for the transfer. If the movement is too late, a body part will be caught by the whip and if it is too early, the whip does not come to the desired position and the technical movement will be flawed. Therefore, you must use your sense of touch to grasp the timing for the transfer between technical movements.

6. Avoid empty whipping. "Empty whipping" means the routation of the whip without any part of the body as the fulcrum, but only the swinging of the arm. Experts describe it as disconnection between movements. It is a pause in the combination of whipping exercises. Spectators also feel the exercises are not strictly executed. Beginners are permitted to do empty whipping while thinking of the next exercise when they are not yet familiar with it. However, empty whipping should decrease as one's skills improve and should finally be eliminated in a whole set of routines which are strictly executed and connected. Avoid the habit

of empty whipping.

7. Reduce the angle of intersection. It is not enough to get the whip close to the body and make the circles round in circling the whip. It is also important to make painstaking efforts to reduce the angle of intersection of the vertical circles drawn by the whip on both sides of the body. Take the Bent-Elbow Whip as an example. First move the whip in a vertical circle on the right side of the body to execute forward circling. Then turn the body to the left and move the whip from under the right armpit to the front of the body and execute backward vertical circling. Then move the whip above the right shoulder and turn the body to the right to execute forward circling vertically on the right side. Shorten the intersecting line of the two vertical circles as much as possible. In this way, you will achieve the result of "circling the whip like a wall against any splashing of water."

8. Pay attention to the location of the feet. In playing the nine-section whip it is very important to keep the feet in the proper position. Although the hand holding the whip can make the circles round and close to the body, if the feet are not properly placed in the fast movement of the whip the legs will often be hit and hurt by the whip head. Therefore, when the whip is circled vertically on both sides of the body, the feet should be placed on a vertical line, one ahead of the other (Fig. 7-1) so that the possibility of impact is reduced. When the whip is circled vertically in front of the body, the feet should be placed on a horizontal line for the same reason (Fig. 7-2). When the whip is circled parallel to the ground, move the head of the whip on a plane to avoid hurting yourself (Fig. 7-3). Finally, placement of the feet should be coordinated with execution of the technical movements to ensure that the movements are well done.

Fig. 7-1

Fig. 7-2

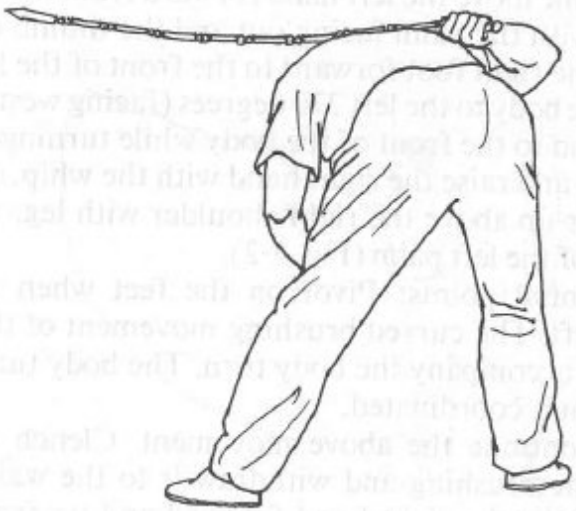


Fig. 7-3

"You will play the boxing skillfully when you practise it one thousand times." This is also true for the play of the nine-section whip. It is important to think more, practise more and gather up more experience to constantly improve the skill of play. Only in this way is it possibly to play the whip as freely and skilfully as you wish.

8. Routines

Preparatory Form

Beginning with the handle, fold the whip section by section and hold them all in the right hand. Use the little and ring fingers to grip the rear part of the handle and the thumb, forefinger and middle finger to hold the sections and head. Keep the legs straight and stand with feet together, facing south, with the arms at the sides. Eyes front (Fig. 8-1).

Starting Exercise: Throw Whip with Body Turn

1. Move the left foot to the left side of the body, and at the same time move the left hand forward from the left side in a curve with the palm facing out and the thumb down. Then move the right foot forward to the front of the left foot and turn the body to the left 270 degrees (facing west). Brush the left hand to the front of the body while turning the body to the left and raise the right hand with the whip, arm bent, to the rear up above the right shoulder with legs apart. Look ahead of the left palm (Fig. 8-2).

Essential points: Pivot on the feet when turning the body left. The curved brushing movement of the left hand should accompany the body turn. The body turn should be quick and coordinated.

2. Continue the above movement. Clench the left fist after the brushing and withdraw it to the waist. Toss the whip from the right hand forward and up from the body at an angle of 45 degrees with the little and ring fingers of

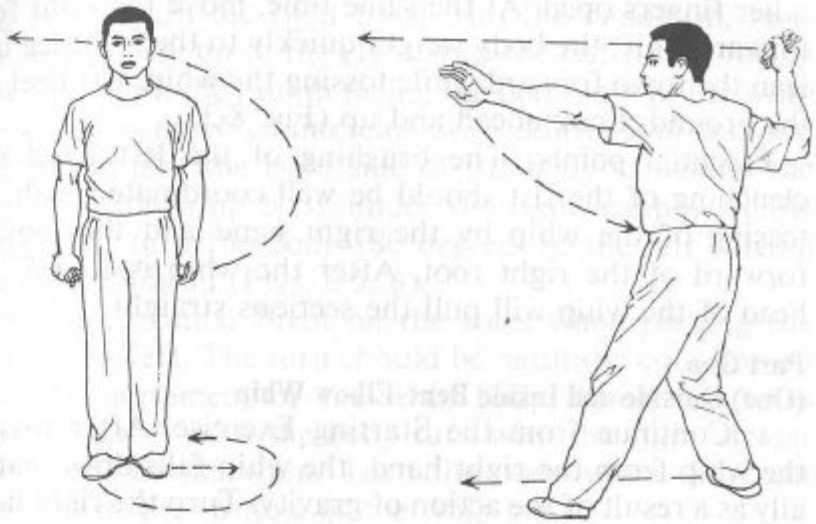


Fig. 8-1 Fig. 8-2

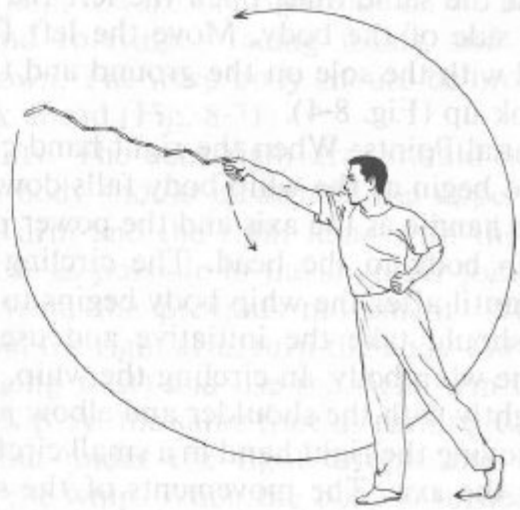


Fig. 8-3

the right hand tightly gripping the handle and the three other fingers open. At the same time, move the right foot forward, shift the body weight quickly to the right leg and lean the torso forward while tossing the whip, left heel off the ground. Look ahead and up (Fig. 8-3).

Essential points: The brushing of the left hand and clenching of the fist should be well coordinated with the tossing of the whip by the right hand and the moving forward of the right foot. After the whip is tossed, the head of the whip will pull the sections straight.

Part One

(One) Outside and Inside Bent-Elbow Whip

1. Continue from the Starting Exercise. After tossing the whip from the right hand, the whip falls down naturally as a result of the action of gravity. Turn the right hand out with the thumb to the right side of the body and the fist facing up, elbow bent and circle the whip counterclockwise to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, open the left fist and place it at the left side of the body. Move the left foot half a step forward with the sole on the ground and the heel slightly off. Look up (Fig. 8-4).

Essential Points: When the right hand circles the whip, it should begin as the whip body falls down after the toss with the handle as the axis and the power passing through the whip body to the head. The circling should not be started until after the whip body begins to fall down. The player should take the initiative and use the handle to circle the whip body. In circling the whip, swing the right arm slightly with the shoulder and elbow joints as the axis while moving the right hand in a small circle with the wrist joint as the axis. The movements of the shoulder, elbow and wrist joint should be well coordinated.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the

head of the whip has moved counterclockwise to forward and above, turn the right hand with the handle in, raise the right elbow up to the right with the fist centre facing down and with the thumb facing the body so that the whip continues to move counterclockwise down from forward and above, past the right side of the body to behind the body. Put the whip body under the right armpit. At the same time, turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing east). Look ahead (Figs. 8-5, 6).

Essential points: Pivot on the soles when turning the body to the left. The turn should be naturally coordinated with the movement of the whip body. Move the whip round together with the body turn with the right armpit as the axis of the whip. Turn the body when the right armpit feels the twining of the whip body.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves down from behind and above to the front and above, bend the right arm and raise it to shoulder level with the elbow joint toward the right side of the body, the right thumb and forefinger facing inside and the fist centre facing down. The whip body should be around the right arm. Look ahead (Fig. 8-7).

Essential points: The bent right arm should be raised level. The whip body should be around the upper side of the right upper arm and the right hand with the handle should be as close as possible to the shoulder joint.

4. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip goes around the right arm, turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing west) and use the right arm to carry and move the whip. At the same time as turning the body, put the left hand under the right armpit and use the fingers to meet the whip. When the body is turned to the west use the left hand to push the moving whip to apply power to the whip. Look ahead (Figs. 8-8, 9).

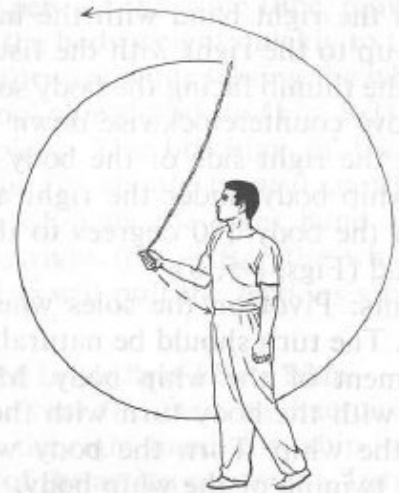


Fig. 8-4

Fig. 8-5

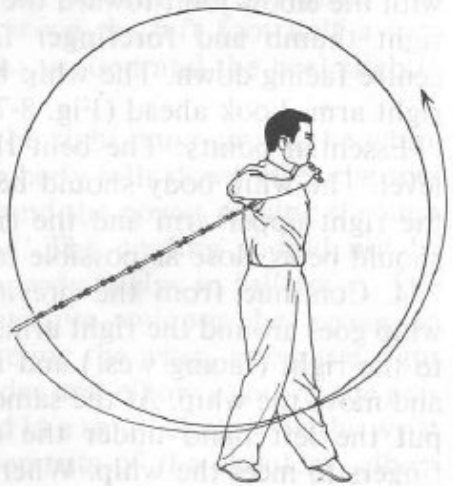


Fig. 8-6

Fig. 8-7

Fig. 8-8

Fig. 8-9

Essential points: Pivot on the soles when turning the body. The timing for the whip wrapping around the right arm should depend on body sense. Turn the body to the right when the right arm feels the whip around it. At the same time extend the left hand to under the right armpit to meet the whip and push it after the body turn to apply power to the whip. However, the power should be exerted softly while the whip is moving, never with too much force.

5. Continue from the previous movement. After the left hand pushes the whip, turn the right hand with the whip handle outward with the thumb and forefinger to the right side of the body and with the fist centre up. Bend the elbow and circle the whip counterclockwise from front down, then behind and up on the right side of the body in a vertical circle. At the same time, shift the body weight to the right leg and raise the left heel slightly keeping the ball of the foot on the ground. Look forward up (Figs. 8-10, 11).

6. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip head moves counterclockwise to front and above the body, turn the right hand with the handle inward, the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing inward and the fist centre facing down. Raise the right elbow upward so that the whip continues to move from the up front position to downward, past the right side of the body to behind and up, with the whip sections lying near the right armpit. At the same time, turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing east). Look ahead (Figs. 8-12, 13).

7. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves counterclockwise from backward and up to forward up, bend the right elbow and raise the arm to shoulder level with the elbow joint facing the right side of the body, the right thumb and forefinger facing inside and

Fig. 8-10

Fig. 8-11

Fig. 8-12

Fig. 8-13

the fist centre facing down with the whip around the right arm. Eyes look right forward (Fig. 8-14).

8. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip wraps around the right arm, turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing west) and use the right arm to move the whip. Simultaneously with the body turn and movement of the whip, extend the left hand to under the right armpit and meet the whip with the fingers. When the body is turned to the west, use the left hand to push the whip to exert some power to the whip. Look ahead (Figs. 8-15, 16).

9. Continue from the previous movement. After the left hand pushes the whip, turn the right hand with the handle outward with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing the right side of the body and fist centre facing up. Bend the elbow and circle the whip counterclockwise from front to behind and above to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, shift the body weight to the right leg with the left heel slightly off and the ball of the foot on the ground. Look front up (Figs. 8-17, 18).

10. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip head moves counterclockwise to the front up, turn the right hand with the handle inward with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing inside and the fist centre facing down. Raise the right elbow up so that the whip continues to move counterclockwise down from front up past the right side of the body to behind and above with the whip sections under the right armpit. At the same time turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing east). Look ahead (Fig. 8-19).

11. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves counterclockwise from behind to the front up, bend the right arm at the elbow and raise it to shoulder

Fig. 8-14

Fig. 8-15

Fig. 8-16

Fig. 8-17

Fig. 8-18

level with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing inside and the fist centre facing down and with the whip around the right arm. Look ahead (Figs. 8-20, 21).

12. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip wraps around the right arm, turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing west) and use the right arm to move the whip. While the body is being turned to the right, the left hand should be extended to under the right armpit to meet the whip with the fingers. When the body faces the west, use the left hand to push the whip to apply some power to the whip. Eyes look ahead (Figs. 8-22, 23, 24).

Note: The Bent-Elbow Whip is repeated in this set of routines three times. When the right hand with the handle circles the whip vertically counterclockwise on the right side of the body, continue to execute the movement of armpit whipping with a left body turn after circling three times. There should be no empty circling between the

Fig. 8-19

Fig. 8-20

Fig. 8-21

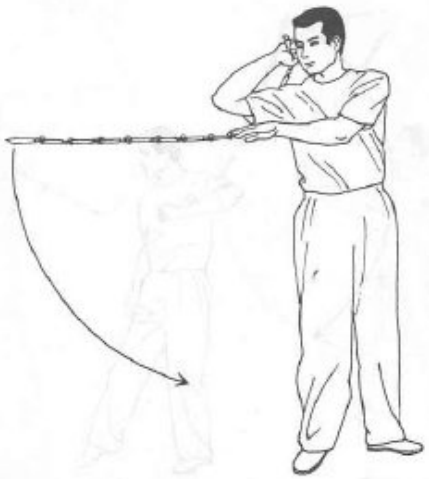


Fig. 8-22

Fig. 8-23

Fig. 8-24

armpit whip and the bent-elbow whip. Combine the armpit whip directly with the bent-elbow whip.

(Two) Over-Back Whip with Body Turn

1. Continue from the previous movement. With the right hand holding the handle and the elbow bent, circle the whip vertically counterclockwise on the right side of the body. Shift body weight to the right foot and raise the left heel keeping the sole on the ground. Look ahead (Fig. 8-25).

Essential Points: In the course of circling, the whip should be moved in a vertical circle and at the same time be kept close to the right side of the body.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip head circles to front up, move the left foot forward and twist the body slightly to the right. At the same time, extend the left arm forward to form a cross with the direction of movement of the whip and wrap the whip around the left forearm. When the whip has wrapped

Fig. 8-25

around the left arm down from the upper outer side and its head comes down at the right side of the body, turn the body 180 degrees to the left. At the same time, raise the right foot and move it to the right side of the body with the left arm moving the whip along with the body turn. Look at the left arm (Figs. 8-26, 27, 28, 29).

Essential points: When the whip wraps around the left arm, it should be around the upper part of the left arm close to the shoulder. While turning the body with the whip, press the left arm downward. Raising the right foot should be quicker than the body turn and the right foot should be moved to the left behind the left foot. Pivot on the left foot when turning the body.

3. Continue from the previous movement. After the body is turned 180 degrees to the left, use the left arm to move the whip away from the arm while turning the body. Quickly move the right foot forward and to the left and raise the right hand with the handle above the right chest, right elbow joint outward with the whip over the shoulder. At the same time, quickly turn the trunk 180 degrees to the left and apply power to the whip with the shoulder as the axis of the whip so that the whip moves counterclockwise backward from above the right shoulder to behind and down and to forward and above. Look ahead (Figs. 8-30, 31, 32).

Essential points: When turning the body, move the right foot forward quickly and pivot on both soles to turn the body at the moment when the whip body moves over the right shoulder.

4. Continue from the previous movement. When the body turns to face the west and the whip body is away from the right shoulder, bend the right arm with the handle in the right hand and circle the whip counterclockwise in a vertical circular motion on the right side of the

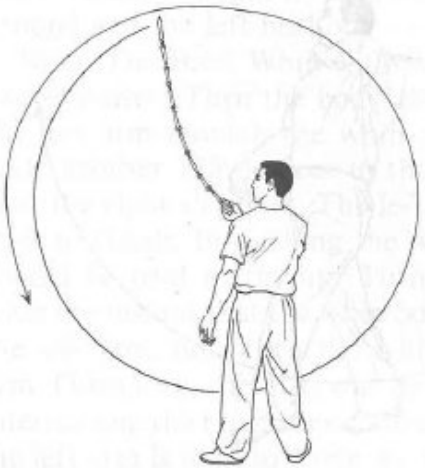


Fig. 8-26

Fig. 8-27

Fig. 8-28

Fig. 8-29

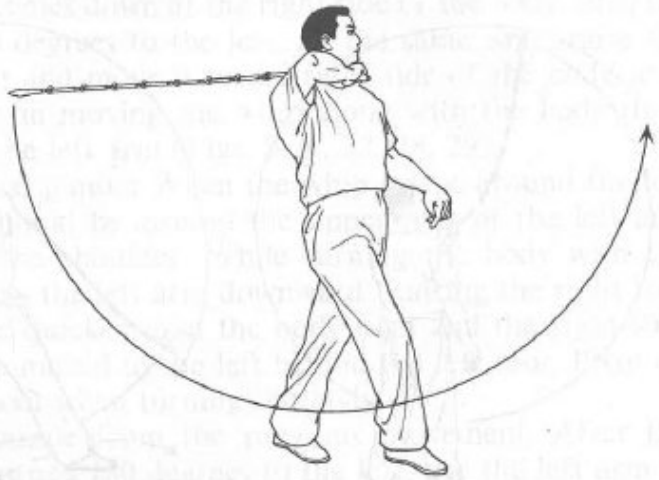


Fig. 8-30

Fig. 8-31

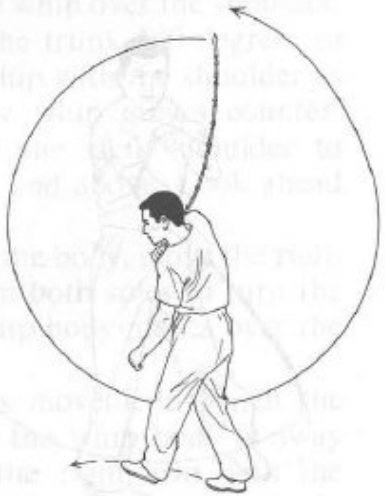


Fig. 8-32

body. At the same time, move the right foot forward and shift the body weight to the right leg with the sole on the ground and the left heel off. Look ahead (Fig. 8-33).

Note: The Back Whip with Body Turn is composed of two exercises: Turn the body 180 degrees to the left with the left arm moving the whip and continue to turn the body another 180 degrees to the left with the whip body over the right shoulder. The left turn is 360 degrees from start to finish. In pushing the whip up, special attention should be paid to timing: Turn the body and move the whip the instant that the whip body begins to wrap around the left arm, not when the whip twines around the left arm. Otherwise, the arm will be caught by the whip thus interrupting the normal execution of the movement. When the left arm is used to move the whip and press it down it helps apply power to the whip.

In executing the over-back whip, turn the body quickly when the whip moves over the right shoulder. Special

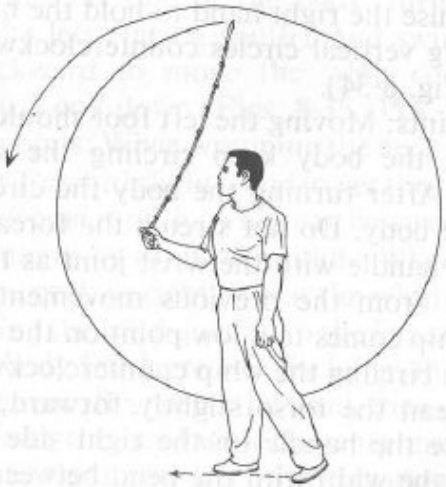


Fig. 8-33

attention should be paid to the timing for the body turn when executing the over-back whip. If the body turns too early, the whip does not move to the shoulder; if it turns too late the whip head hits the calf of the right leg. In moving the whip over the back, place the right hand with the handle above the right chest, the bend between the thumb and forefinger up and the fist centre facing in. In the whole process of moving the whip over the back, never twitch the whip or it will change the radius of the whip movement and affect the smooth completion of the technical movement. In turning the body to move the whip over the back, continue to do the next movement only after the whip moves away from the right shoulder.

(Three) Wrap Neck from Right

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the right hand circles the whip counterclockwise to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body and the whip head moves to front up, move the left foot forward and turn the body 90 degrees to the right (facing north). At the same time use the right hand to hold the handle of the whip and swing vertical circles counterclockwise in front of the body (Fig. 8-34).

Essential points: Moving the left foot should be natural. While turning the body keep circling the whip in the original state. After turning the body the circling should be close to the body. Do not stretch the forearm forward and swing the handle with the wrist joint as the axis.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the head of the whip comes to a low point on the right side of the body while circling the whip counterclockwise in front of the body lean the torso slightly forward, lower your head and place the handle on the right side of the neck while moving the whip with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing up and the fist centre facing in. The

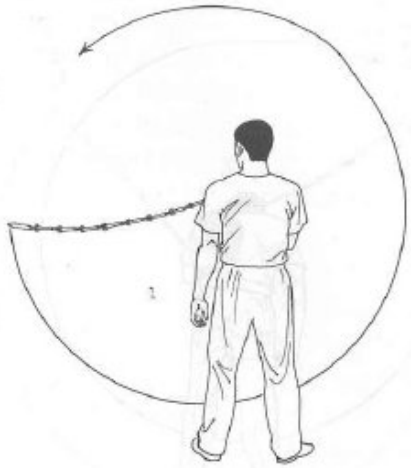


Fig. 8-34

whip will twine around the neck from the right to the left. At the same time, raise the right foot quickly, move it forward to the left side of the body, turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing south), and swing the head to the left backward to move the whip counterclockwise continuously. Look down (Figs. 8-35, 35A, 36, 37).

Essential points: When wrapping the neck from the right, lean the body forward slightly and lower the head so that the wrapping movement of the whip can be smoothly executed without changing its orbit of motion. When lowering the head keep the neck upright. When the whip twines around the neck, swing the head quickly to the left side of the body and turn the body 180 degrees to the left at the same time. In swinging the head, first bend the head, then swing the head and finally raise the head with the whip moving from the upper right to the lower left with the momentum. After swinging the head the whip body will move away from the

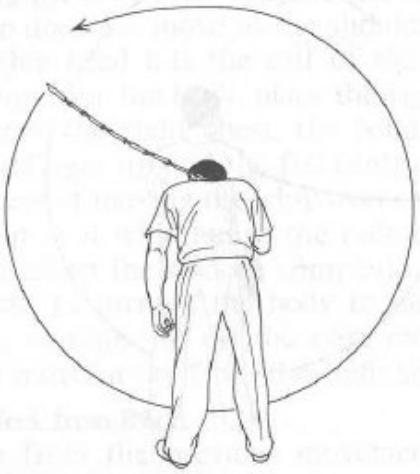


Fig. 8-35

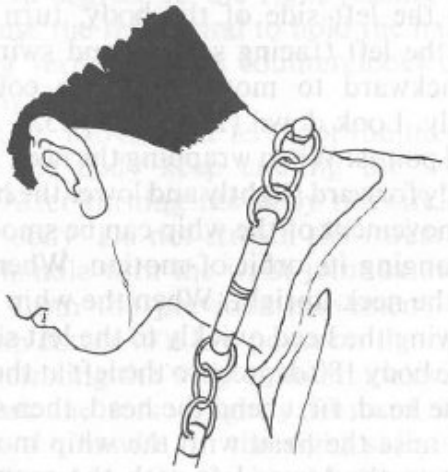


Fig. 8-35A

Fig. 8-36

Fig. 8-37

neck naturally. The whip handle should be placed on the right side of the neck when the whip body wraps around the neck and then moves away from the neck and it should not be twitched or it will change the original line of movement. In the whole exercise the swinging of the head, movement of the foot forward and turning of the body should be well coordinated.

(Four) Wrap Neck from Left

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves away from the neck, bend the right arm with the whip handle in the hand and circle the whip counterclockwise in a vertical circle in front of the body. Stand with feet apart. Look upper left (Figs. 8-38, 39).

Essential points: The whip circling should be as close to the body as possible and be perpendicular to the ground.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip body circles to below the body on the left, lean the torso slightly forward and lower the head, move the handle from the right to the left and place it on the left side of the neck with the fist centre facing in and with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing up. Wrap the whip around the neck from left to right. Then, straighten the torso up, raise the head and bend it backward. Look up (Figs. 8-41, 41A, 42).

Essential points: While wrapping around the neck, lean the torso slightly forward and lower the head with the neck straight so that the whip moves accurately to position. Raise the head and bend it backward to make way for the whip to pass under the chin while wrapping the neck and at the same time preparing for the execution of the following movement. Keep the right hand on the neck.

3. Continue from the previous movement. While bending the head backward, raise the left foot and move it forward on the right side of the body and turn the body

Fig. 8-38

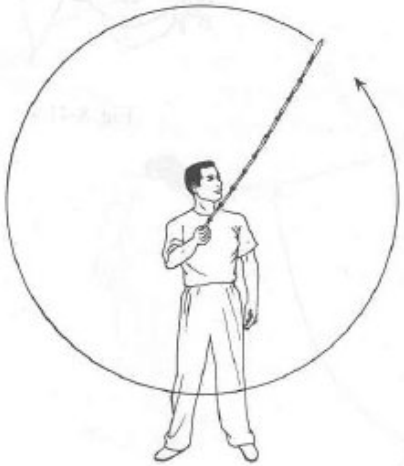


Fig. 8-39

Fig. 8-40

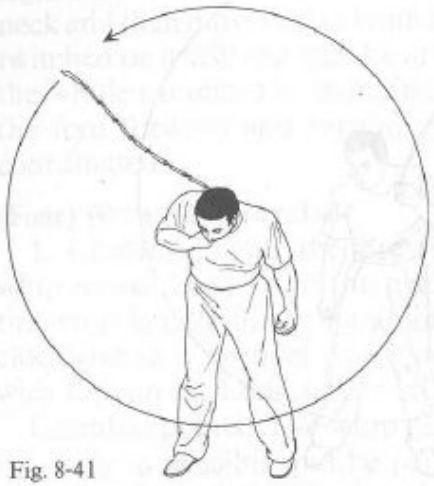


Fig. 8-41

Fig. 8-41A

Fig. 8-42

180 degrees to the right (facing north). At the same time, snap the head quickly to the right side and with the neck as the axis of the whip move the whip counterclockwise from high on the left side of the body to low on the right side of the body. Look down to the left (Fig. 8-43).

Essential points: While turning the body to the right and snapping the head, move the head to the right back in a curve from the position with the head bent back. Keep the head bent forward after the snap. All the movements in the whole process—moving the left foot to the right, turning the body and snapping the head—should be well coordinated and without pause.

4. Continue from the previous movement. After turning the body 180 degrees to the right (facing north) and snapping the head the whip body will move away from the neck naturally. Bend the right arm with the handle in hand and circle the whip counterclockwise in a vertical circular motion in front of the body. Stand with feet apart and look

Fig. 8-43

Fig. 8-44

to the left (Fig. 8-44).

(Five) Double-Hand Uppercut Whip

1. Continue from the previous movement. Turn the body 90 degrees to the left (facing west), move the right foot immediately in front of the left and shift the body weight to the right leg with the left heel up and the ball of the foot on the ground. At the same time, hold the whip handle in the right hand and circle the whip counterclockwise to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. Look ahead (Figs. 8-45, 46).

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip head circles forward to above the body, extend the right arm slightly forward and move the left hand to grip the right, holding the whip in both hands. At the same time, move the left foot forward and look ahead and up (Fig. 8-47).

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the left hand grips the right, turn the body 90 degrees to the right (facing north) and look left (Fig. 8-48). Then immediately bend the right leg at the knee and raise it and continue to turn the body 90 degrees to the right with the left foot as axis (facing east). At the same time, hold the whip in both hands and raise it upward to the right for an uppercut movement. Look ahead and up (Fig. 8-49).

4. Continue from the previous movement. Pivot on the left foot and continue to turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing west). At the same time, hold the whip in both hands and continue the uppercut movement while turning the body. Look ahead and up (Fig. 8-50).

Note: When raising the whip for an uppercut movement, there should be a curved movement, raising the whip up while turning the body starting when both hands grip the handle in front of the body. The whole exercise calls for a right body turn of 360 degrees using the left

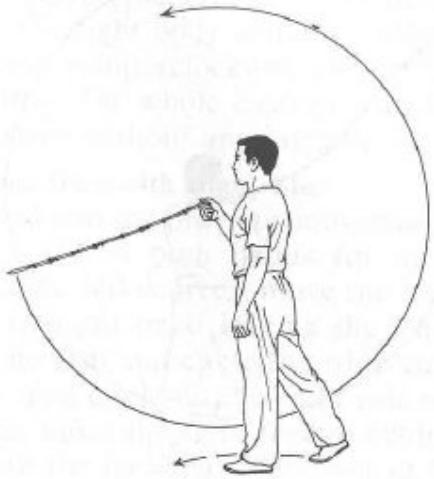


Fig. 8-45

Fig. 8-46

Fig. 8-47

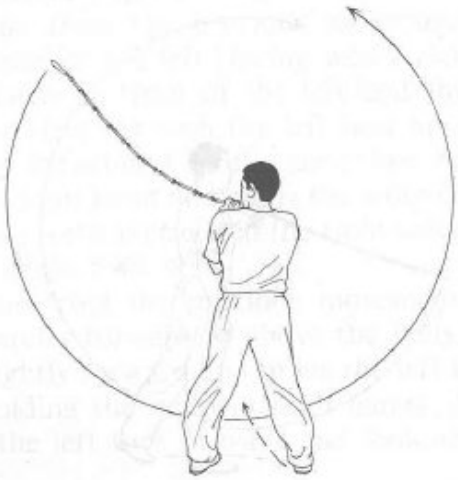


Fig. 8-48

Fig. 8-49

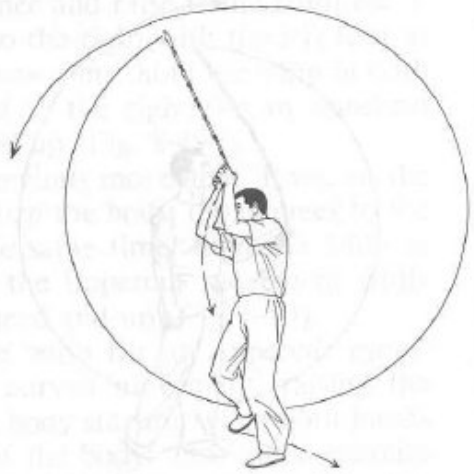


Fig. 8-50

foot as the axis. At the same time, the right foot makes a quick circuit around the left foot to coordinate the smooth execution of the right body turn. In raising the whip up, the whip moves counterclockwise for one circuit with the right body turn. The whole exercise should be well coordinated and done without any interruption.

(Six) Over-Back Whip with Empty Step

1. Continue from the previous movement. While raising the whip upward in both hands for an uppercut and turning the body 360 degrees, move the left hand quickly away from the right hand leaving the whip in the right hand. Bend the arm and circle the whip counterclockwise to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, move the right foot to behind the left foot and stand with the feet apart, left foot in front and right foot behind. Look ahead (Fig. 8-51).

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves counterclockwise on the right side of the body and the whip head comes forward to above the body, turn the right hand with the whip inward with the back of the fist right under the right armpit and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing backward. Move the whip obliquely upward from under the armpit across the back to above the left shoulder. At the same time, raise the right foot, stamp the left foot to make a standing jump landing on the right foot. Bend the right leg to a half squat and extend the left foot forward, toe on the ground and left knee inward to form a left empty step. At the same time, stretch the left hand forward to above the body to meet the whip coming from above the left shoulder to touch the whip in front the body. Look ahead (Figs. 8-52, 53).

Essential points: Over-back whip is the first oblique circular movement included in this set of routines. It calls for a greater ability to control the whip. In wrapping,

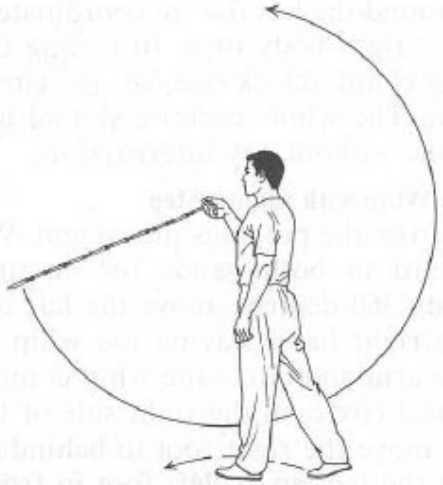


Fig. 8-51

Fig. 8-52

Fig. 8-53

move the whip from under the right armpit, across the back and to near the area between the neck and shoulder. The whip should move precisely to the desired position. At the beginning of the wrapping, turn the right hand inward, apply power to the handle and use the handle to move the whip so that the power goes to the whip head.

With the left hand extended forward above the body use the back of the left palm close to the thumb and forefinger to meet the whip. The instant the whip is touched, withdraw the left hand using it only as a buffer to control the whip in front of the body. The whole exercise should be well coordinated and the empty step should be firm.

Part Two

(Seven) Outside Bent-Elbow Whip

1. Continue from the previous movement. Stand on the right leg with the knee straight and withdraw the left foot slightly, toe on the ground to form the left high empty step. At the same time push the whip up backward with the back of the left hand. Look ahead (Fig. 8-54).

Essential points: The upward push should be quick and resolute. It should be executed together with the formation of the high empty step. In pushing up the whip, push the left hand up to pull the whip sections straight.

2. Continue from the previous movement. After pushing up the whip, move the whip clockwise down from behind and above to behind and below. Hold the handle in the right hand, bend the elbow and raise the wrist up with the bend between the thumb and forefinger up and circle the whip clockwise to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, shift the body weight to between the legs. Look ahead (Fig. 8-55).

Essential points: The circling of the whip must be round and close to the right side of the body. Place the left hand naturally down by the left side of the body.

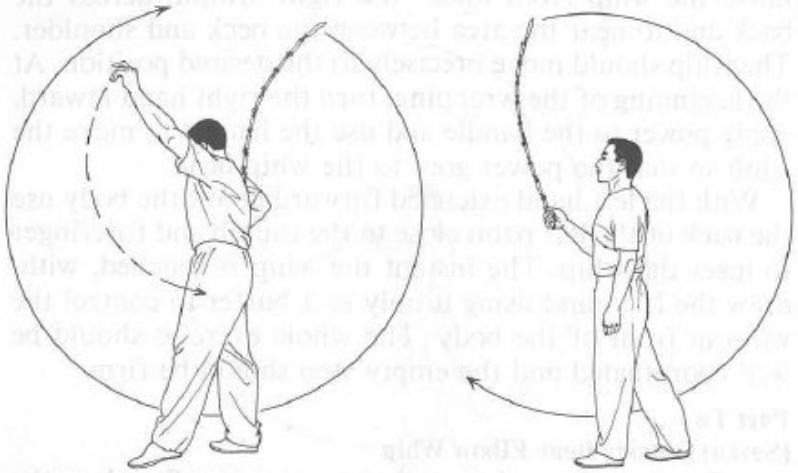


Fig. 8-54 Fig. 8-55

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip is moved clockwise to above the body, turn the right wrist inward with the fist centre facing down and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing in. Bend the left arm and extend the elbow outward and move the whip clockwise by inertia from above the body to behind and below with the whip body around the right arm. Look ahead and down (Fig. 8-56).

Essential points: In wrapping the whip around the right arm, bend the right arm at the elbow and raise it above the right shoulder so that the whip wraps the right arm from the back outer side downward.

4. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the whip twines around the right arm, move the left hand from under the right armpit to meet the whip. Turn the body quickly 180 degrees to the right (facing east) and use the bent right arm to move the whip in a curved line

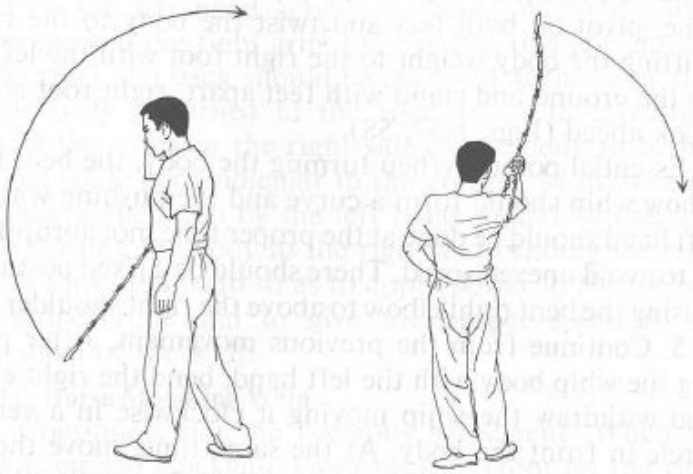


Fig. 8-56 Fig. 8-57

Fig. 8-58

upward to the right and then down while using the left hand to push the whip to apply power on it. At the same time, pivot on both feet and twist the body to the right, shifting the body weight to the right foot with the left toe on the ground and stand with feet apart, right foot ahead. Look ahead (Figs. 8-57, 58).

Essential points: When turning the body, the bent right elbow whip should form a curve and the pushing with the left hand should be done at the proper time, not abruptly, so as to avoid uneven speed. There should be a fixed posture of raising the bent right elbow to above the right shoulder.

5. Continue from the previous movement. After pushing the whip body with the left hand, bend the right elbow and withdraw the whip moving it clockwise in a vertical circle in front the body. At the same time, move the left foot forward and shift the body weight forward to the left leg with the ball of the right foot on the ground. Look ahead (Figs. 8-59, 60).

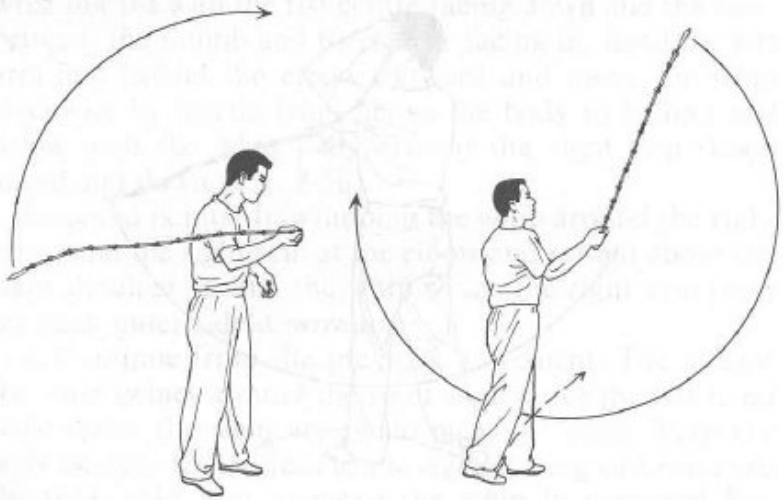


Fig. 8-59 Fig. 8-60

Note: The change from the low empty step to the high empty step should be made simultaneously with the whip push by the left hand across the back. When the whip wraps around the right arm, the bending of the right arm to the right and back should be executed at the same time as the body is turned to the right so as to effectively control the whip on the right side of the body to form a vertical circle perpendicular to the ground. Moreover, the pushing of the whip by the left hand should be executed while turning the body to the right and bending the right arm to move the whip so as to apply power to the whip at the proper time and to give the proper speed to the movement of the whip.

(Eight) Horse Mounting Whip

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip is circled clockwise from back to front on the right side of the body to above the body, use the left leg to support the body weight and raise the right leg horizontally on the right side of the body. At the same time, hold the handle in the right hand and wrap the whip from the inner side of the right thigh around the bottom of the thigh, out and up. Look above to the right (Fig. 8-61).

Essential points: Keep balance in supporting the body with the left foot. In raising the right leg horizontally to the right side, there will be a tendency to move it inward. When wrapping, the handle should be placed by the inner side of the right leg along with the movement of the whip.

2. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the whip wraps under the right thigh, move the right leg inward to the left so as to apply power to the whip. At the same time turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing west) and land the right foot ahead of the left foot. Immediately raise the whip handle up to above the right shoulder with the bend between the thumb and forefinger

Fig. 8-61

facing back so as to carry the whip over the right shoulder. Look ahead (Figs. 8-62, 63, 64).

Essential points: Moving the right leg inward will make the body turn to the left with the left foot as axis. When moving the right foot inward, press the thigh downward to move the whip clockwise from above the outer side of the right leg to under the right leg with the turn to the left and from under the right leg to above and the front of the body. At this time, the right hand should execute the movement of carrying the whip across the back. When moving the right leg inward, land the right foot ahead the left foot.

3. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the whip is carried across the back and the right shoulder, pivot quickly on the balls of both feet, turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing east) and move the whip clockwise from below and behind the body to behind and above.

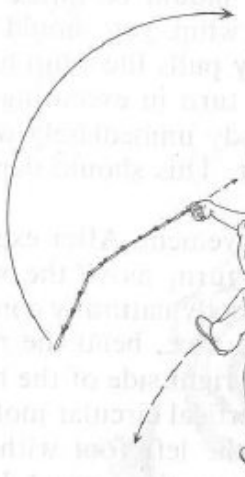


Fig. 8-62

Fig. 8-63

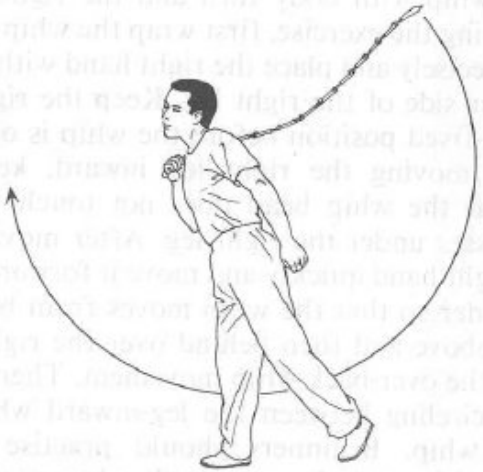


Fig. 8-64

Look ahead (Figs. 8-65, 66).

Essential points: The body turn should be quick and resolute. In executing the over-back whip, you should feel the power with which the whip body pulls the whip head. Moreover, the timing for the body turn in executing the movement is essential: Turn the body immediately when the whip touches the right shoulder. This should depend entirely on the sense of touch.

4. Continue from the previous movement. After executing the over-back whip with body turn, move the whip forward from behind with the whip body naturally coming off the right shoulder. At the same time, bend the right arm at the elbow, pull it back to the right side of the body and circle the whip clockwise in a vertical circular motion. Shift the body weight forward to the left foot with the right heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground. Look ahead (Fig. 8-67).

Note: The Horse Mounting Whip is composed of the over-back whip with body turn and the right-leg-inward whip. In doing the exercise, first wrap the whip around the right leg precisely and place the right hand with the handle by the inner side of the right leg. Keep the right hand at a relatively fixed position before the whip is off the right leg. When moving the right leg inward, keep it high enough that the whip head does not touch the ground when it passes under the right leg. After moving the leg, raise the right hand quickly and move it forward above the right shoulder so that the whip moves from below to the front and above and then behind over the right shoulder to execute the over-back whip movement. There should be no empty circling between the leg-inward whip and the over-back whip. Beginners should practise the horse mounting whip and the over-back whip separately and then practise them together as a combination.

Fig. 8-65

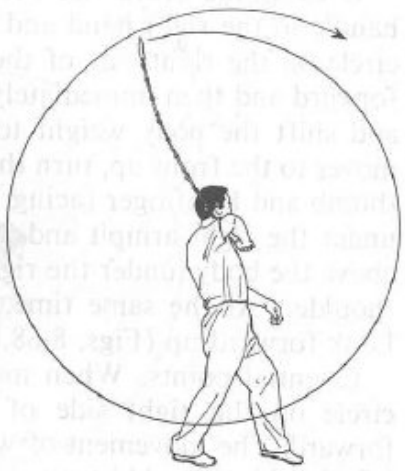


Fig. 8-66

Fig. 8-67

(Nine) Right Cross-on-Back Whip

1. Continue from the previous movement. Hold the handle in the right hand and circle the whip in a vertical circle on the right side of the body. Move the right foot forward and then immediately move the left foot forward and shift the body weight to both legs. When the whip moves to the front up, turn the right wrist inward with the thumb and forefinger facing inward, place the right hand under the right armpit and move the whip from forward above the body, under the right armpit and across the left shoulder. At the same time, lean the head to the right. Look forward up (Figs. 8-68, 68A).

Essential points: When moving the whip in a vertical circle on the right side of the body, move both feet forward. The movement of wrapping the whip across the left shoulder should be precise with the whip touching the neck on the left shoulder. When turning the right hand inward, extend the right elbow outward.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves from under the right armpit to the left side of the neck, pivot on the balls of both feet and quickly turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing west). Snap the head backward to the right. At the same time, continue to move the whip by momentum to the left up and then the whip will of its own accord move off the shoulder and back. Look ahead (Figs. 8-69, 70, 71).

Essential points: The timing for the body turn should be: When the left shoulder (or the lower part of the neck) feels the whip, turn the body quickly to the right. The body turn and snap of the head should be executed simultaneously.

Note: the Right Cross-on-Back Whip is an oblique circular movement in the nine-section whip routines which calls for the precise wrapping of the whip to the desired

Fig. 8-68

Fig. 8-68A

Fig. 8-69

Fig. 8-70

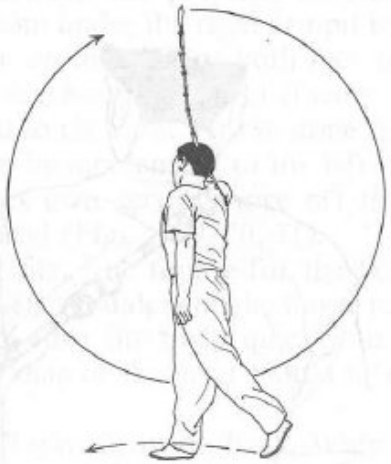


Fig. 8-71

positions when finishing. The body should be turned at the proper time. If it is turned too early, the whip does not move to the desired position and if it is too late, the body part is easily caught by the whip. In the whole process of circling and turning the body, the position of the right hand under the right armpit should not be changed. Special attention should be paid to the fact that the whip handle should not be moved too early or the radius of movement of the whip will be changed. In the beginning, the whip should be played slowly so as to gain an understanding of the better part of the exercise.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves of its own accord off the left shoulder, bend the right arm at the elbow, withdraw it, circle the whip and move it clockwise in a vertical circular motion on the right side of the body. Then, move the left foot forward and turn the body 90 degrees to the right (facing north). Hold the whip in the right hand and continue to

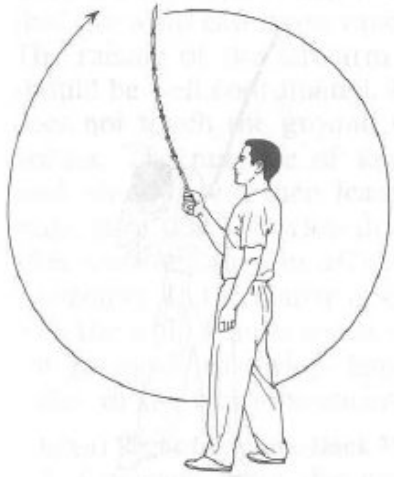


Fig. 8-72

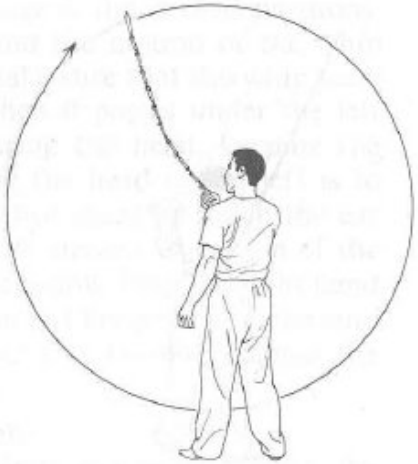


Fig. 8-73

circle the whip clockwise. Look ahead (Figs. 8-72, 73).

Essential points: Move the left foot forward gently while circling the whip.

(Ten) Left Cross-on-Back Whip

1. Continue from the previous movement. While the right hand circles the whip clockwise from right to left in a vertical circle in front of the body and the whip head moves to an angle above the right side of the body, raise the left arm horizontally. Hold the handle in the right hand and move it to under the left armpit with the fist centre facing in and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing left. Then move the whip from the left armpit, across the back to the right side of the neck. At the same time, lean the torso slightly forward and lower the head, keeping the neck straight. Look ahead and down (Figs. 8-74, 74A)

Essential points: Raise the left arm horizontally and move the whip across the back simultaneously, and wrap

Fig. 8-74

Fig. 8-74A

the whip precisely at the desired positions.

2. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the whip moves to right side of the neck, swing the head in a curved line to above the left side of the body, turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing south) and move the whip clockwise over the right shoulder and down along the right side of the body and then to the front and above. Look ahead and down (Figs. 8-75, 75A, 76, 77).

Essential points: Pivot on the left foot to turn the body the instant the whip moves to the right shoulder.

3. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the whip moves off the right shoulder after the body turn, move the right foot forward and at the same time bend the right elbow and withdraw it to the front of the body. Circle the whip clockwise in a vertical circular motion from left to right. Look ahead and up (Figs. 8-78, 79).

Note: The Left Cross-on-Back Whip involves a great degree of difficulty. When moving the whip, the right hand should control the line of movement well to ensure that the whip can move precisely to the desired positions. The raising of the left arm and the motion of the whip should be well coordinated. Make sure that the whip head does not touch the ground when it passes under the left armpit. The purpose of lowering the head, keeping the neck straight and then leaning the head to the left is to make sure that the whip does not graze or touch the ear after the body turn or affect the smooth execution of the movement. In the course of execution, keep the right hand with the whip handle under the left armpit and make sure not to move the whip handle and thereby change the radius of the whip movement.

(Eleven) Right Cross-on-Back Whip

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves clockwise from the front of the body to above

Fig. 8-75

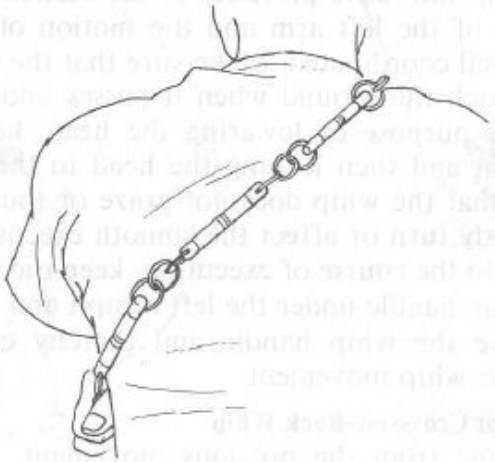


Fig. 8-75A

Fig. 8-76

Fig. 8-77

Fig. 8-78

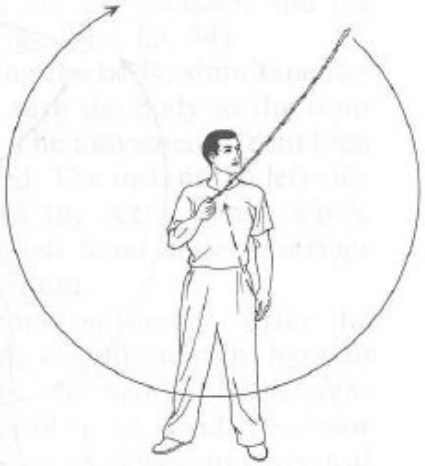


Fig. 8-79

the right side of the body, hold the handle in the right hand, bend the arm and swing the handle to the front of the right shoulder. Bend the left arm and raise the hand up to meet the right hand. Pass the whip from the right hand to the left hand quickly in front of and above the right shoulder. After taking the whip, the left hand swings it clockwise from right to left. Look ahead (Fig. 8-80).

Essential points: The handover of the whip from the right hand to the left hand should be neat and well coordinated. In handing over the whip, the right hand swings the handle from the left side to above the right shoulder in a curve. After taking the whip, the left hand circles the whip from the front of the right shoulder to the left side.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the left hand takes the whip in front of the right shoulder, bend the right shoulder and raise it upward to leave the right armpit empty. Hold the handle in the left hand and circle

Fig. 8-80

the whip to under the right armpit, with the centre of the fist facing in and the thumb and forefinger to the right. At the same time, lean the torso slightly forward and bend the head towards the right shoulder keeping the neck straight. At this time, use the momentum of the whip to move it from under the right armpit across the back and to the left side of the neck. Look down to the left (Figs. 8-81, 81A).

Essential points: Bending and raising the right arm and the wrapping movement of the left hand should be coordinated. In wrapping, the whip moves precisely to the desired position with the speed of motion well controlled.

3. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the whip moves to the left side of the neck, turn the body quickly 180 degrees to the right (facing north). At the same time, move the left foot forward to the right. Stand with feet apart and swing the head with the force of the body's turn. At this time, the whip moves clockwise from above the neck over the left shoulder to the right side of the body and consequently off the left shoulder and the back. Look down to the left (Figs. 8-82, 83, 84).

Essential points: When turning the body, simultaneously swing the head to the right, turn the body to the right and move the left foot forward. The movements from high to low should be well coordinated. The instant the left side of the neck feels the whip turn the body. In the whole process, keep the handle in the left hand under the right armpit without changing its position.

4. Continue from the previous movement. After the whip moves off the body, quickly extend the right hand to above the right armpit and pass the handle to the right hand. Hold the handle in the right hand, bend the elbow and raise it up and circle the whip clockwise in a vertical circle on the right side of the body. Then, turn the body

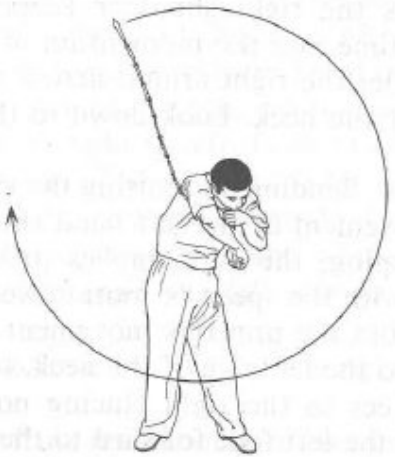


Fig. 8-81

Fig. 8-81A

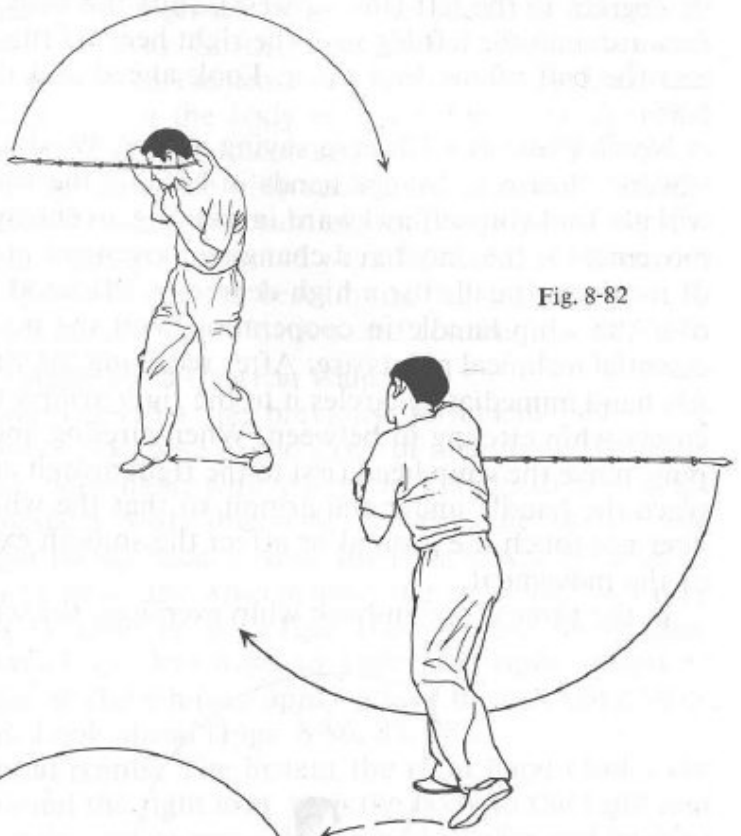


Fig. 8-82

Fig. 8-83

Fig. 8-84

90 degrees to the left (facing west), shift the body weight forward onto the left leg with the right heel off the ground and the ball of the foot on it. Look ahead and up (Fig. 8-85).

Note: There is a Chinese saying among Wushu practitioners: "Learn to change hands in holding the whip, you will not find yourself awkward in meeting an enemy." This movement is the only hand-changing movement in this set of routines. It calls for a high degree of left hand control over the whip handle in cooperation with the body. The essential technical points are: After receiving the whip, the left hand immediately circles it to the right armpit without empty whip circling in between. When circling and wrapping, move the whip head first to the right armpit and then place the handle under the armpit so that the whip head does not touch the ground or affect the smooth execution of the movement.

In the three cross-on-back whip exercises, the wrapping

Fig. 8-85

movements are executed behind the body and cannot be seen with the eyes. So the execution of the movements depends mainly on the sense of touch in the various body parts. If you turn the body only after you see the whip body move to the shoulder and neck, the various body parts will be hit by the whip sections. Practitioners should practise the exercises separately but repeatedly. In the course of practice you should work hard on your ability to control the whip and the best timing for the body turn. It requires accuracy, coordination and continuity.

(Twelve) Single-Hand Uppercut Whip

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves clockwise to the front of and above the body, raise the right hand with the whip handle to above the right shoulder with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing back. Extend the right elbow outward to horizontal, move the whip around the right arm and turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing east). At the same time, stretch the left hand to under the right armpit to push against the whip to apply power to it at the proper moment. Look ahead (Figs. 8-86, 87, 88).

Essential points: The instant the right hand circles the whip around the right arm, turn the body to the right and use the right arm to move the whip clockwise and back to the right. At this time, use the left hand to push against the whip body at the proper moment to apply power. Pivot on the soles of the feet when turning the body.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves naturally off the right arm after turning the body, hold the handle in the right hand and circle the whip clockwise in a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, shift the body weight to the right leg with the left heel slightly off the ground and the ball of the foot on it. Look ahead (Fig. 8-89).

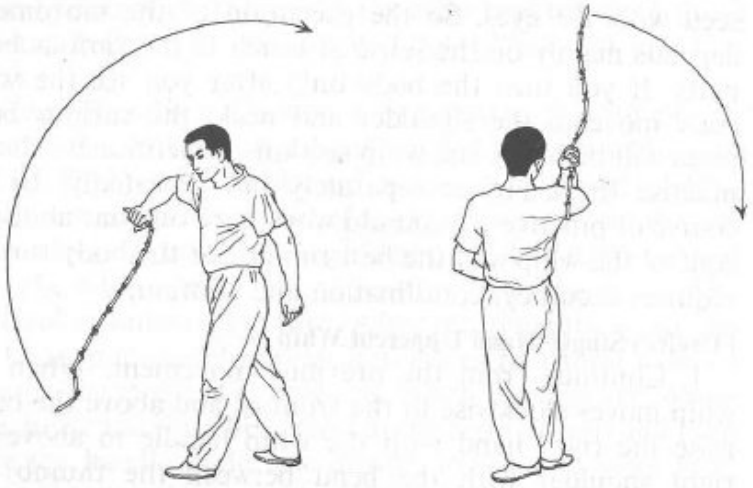


Fig. 8-86 Fig. 8-87

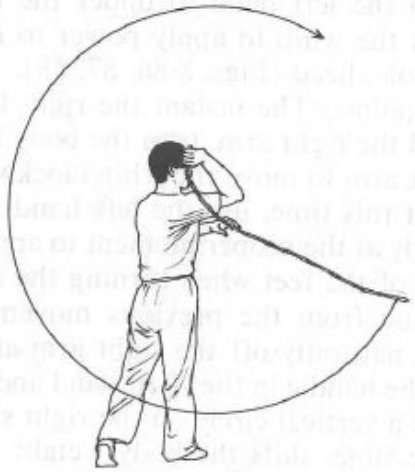


Fig. 8-88

Essential points: The vertical circular movement of the whip should be perpendicular to the ground and close to the right side of the body.

3. Continue from the previous movement. While the right hand circles the whip clockwise on the right side of the body and moves it to behind and above the body, turn the right hand inward with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing in and the centre of the fist facing back. Turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing west) and place the whip under the right armpit. At the same time, pivot on the balls of the feet and turn both to the left. Look ahead and down (Fig. 8-90).

Essential points: Turn the right hand in to move the whip quickly to under the right armpit. The left body turn should be resolute.

4. Continue from the previous movement. Move the whip clockwise from behind and above the right side of the body to below and the front of the body. When the

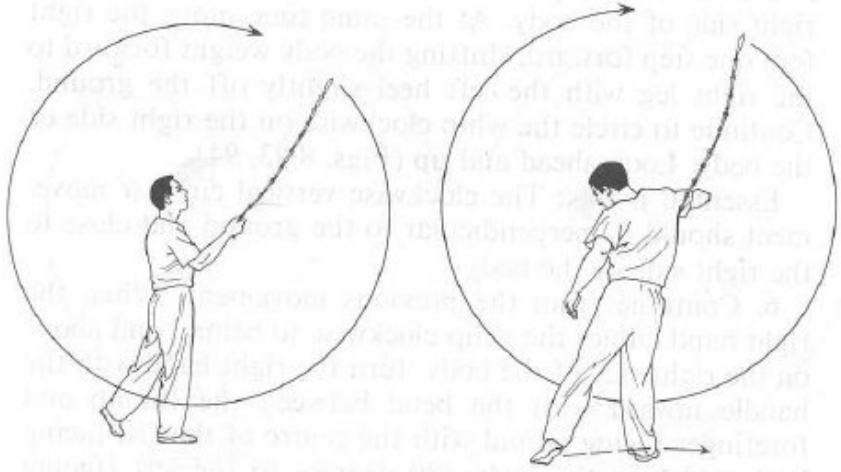


Fig. 8-89 Fig. 8-90

whip head moves to the front of and above the body, hold the handle in the right hand and raise it to above the right shoulder, with the centre of the fist facing in and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing back. At the same time, move the left foot back one step and shift the body weight to the right foot. Continue to turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing east) pivoting on the balls of the feet. Keep the right hand with the handle above the right shoulder and use it to move the whip clockwise in a vertical circle. Look ahead (Figs. 8-91, 92).

Essential points: In executing the whip uppercut, raising the right hand with the handle to above the right shoulder should be quick. Use this movement to continue the vertical circular movement of the whip. The raising of the hand should be executed together with the body turn, and they should both be continuous and quick.

5. Continue from the previous movement. After turning the body, hold the handle in the right hand, bend the arm and circle the whip clockwise in a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time move the right foot one step forward, shifting the body weight forward to the right leg with the left heel slightly off the ground. Continue to circle the whip clockwise on the right side of the body. Look ahead and up (Figs. 8-93, 94).

Essential points: The clockwise vertical circular movement should be perpendicular to the ground and close to the right side of the body.

6. Continue from the previous movement. When the right hand circles the whip clockwise to behind and above on the right side of the body, turn the right hand with the handle inward with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing in and with the centre of the fist facing back and turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing west) with the whip placed under the right armpit. At the

Fig. 8-91

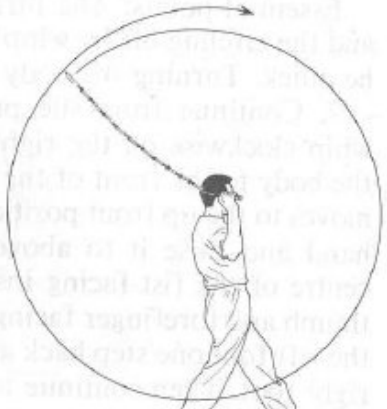


Fig. 8-92

Fig. 8-93

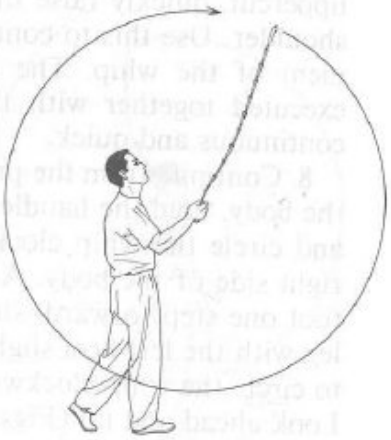


Fig. 8-94

same time, pivot on the balls of the feet and twist the body to the left. Look ahead and down (Fig. 8-95).

Essential points: The turning of the right hand inward and the circling of the whip under the right armpit should be quick. Turning the body to the left should be resolute.

7. Continue from the previous movement. Move the whip clockwise on the right side from behind and above the body to the front of the body and low. When the whip moves to the up front position, hold the handle in the right hand and raise it to above the right shoulder with the centre of the fist facing inside and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing back. At the same time, move the left foot one step back and shift the body weight to the right foot. Then continue to turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing east) pivoting on the balls of the feet. Keep the right hand with the handle above the right shoulder and use this to move the whip clockwise in a vertical circle. Look ahead (Figs. 8-96, 97).

Essential points: When raising the hand for the whip uppercut, quickly raise the right hand to above the right shoulder. Use this to continue the vertical circular movement of the whip. The raising of the hand should be executed together with the body turn which should be continuous and quick.

8. Continue from the previous movement. After turning the body, hold the handle in the right hand, bend the arm and circle the whip clockwise in a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, move the right foot one step forward, shift the body weight to the right leg with the left heel slightly off the ground and continue to circle the whip clockwise on the right side of the body. Look ahead and up (Figs. 8-98, 99).

Essential points: The vertical circular movement of the whip should be perpendicular to the ground and close to

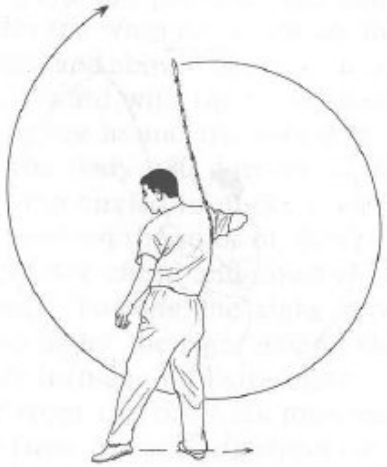


Fig. 8-95

Fig. 8-96

Fig. 8-97

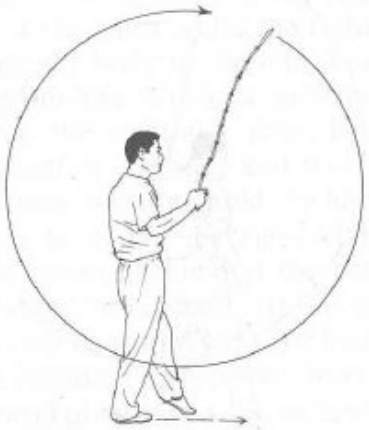


Fig. 8-98

Fig. 8-99

Fig. 8-100

the right side of the body.

9. Continue from the previous movement. When the right hand circles the whip clockwise on the right side of the body to behind and above the body, turn the right hand with the handle inward with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing in and the center of the fist facing back and turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing west) with the whip circled to under the right armpit. At the same time, pivot on the soles of the feet and twist the body to the left. Look ahead and down (Fig. 8-100).

Essential points: Turning the right hand inward and circling the whip under the right armpit should be quick and the left body turn should be resolute.

10. Continue from the previous movement. Move the whip clockwise from behind and above on the right side of the body to the front of the body and low. When the whip head moves to the up front position, hold the handle in the right hand and raise it to above the right shoulder with the certre of the fist facing in and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing back. At the same time, move the left foot one step back and shift the body weight to the right foot. Continue to turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing east) pivoting on the soles of the feet. Keep the right hand with the handle above the right shoulder and use this to move the whip clockwise in a vertical circle. Look ahead (Figs. 8-101, 102).

Essential points: Raising the right hand with the whip to above the right shoulder should be quick. Use this to continue the vertical circular movement of the whip. Raising the whip for an uppercut movement should be executed together with the body turn which should be continuous and quick.

11. Continue from the previous movement. After turning the body hold the handle in the right hand, bend the

Fig. 8-101

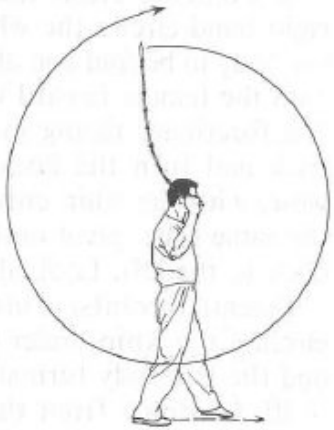


Fig. 8-102

arm and circle the whip clockwise in a vetical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, move the right foot one step forward shifting the body weight to the right foot with left heel off the ground and continue to circle the whip clockwise on the right side of the body. Look ahead and up (Fig. 8-103).

Essential points: The clockwise vertical circular movement of the whip should be perpendicular to the ground and close to the right side of the body.

Note: After the cross-on-back whip in the previous exercise is completed, the passing of the whip between the two hands must be done at the proper time and neatly. The whole body turn is 360 degrees in the uppercut whip exercise. The whip is moved clockwise on the right side of the body while the body turns. In the whole uppercut whip exercise the whip does not touch the shoulder. This is the essential difference from the over-back whip with body

Fig. 8-103

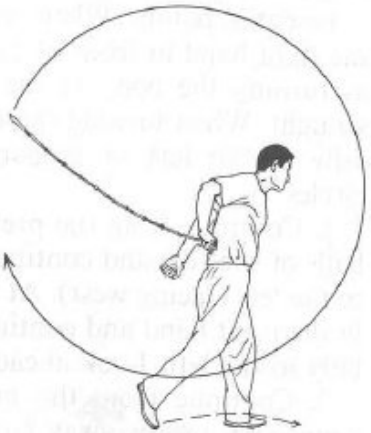


Fig. 8-104

turn. The uppercut whip exercise should be done three times.

(Thirteen) Forward Whip Sweep

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip has moved clockwise on the right side of the body to the up front position, move the left foot forward and shift the body weight to the left foot with the right heel off and the toe on the ground. At the same time, turn the right hand with the handle in, with the centre of the fist facing down and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing in. Extend the right elbow outward and place the handle under the right armpit. Then move the right foot forward and shift the body weight forward to the right foot keeping only the left toe on the ground. At the same time, turn the body 90 degrees to the left (facing north), hold the whip in the right hand and move the whip to the left with the body's turn to the left. Look ahead to the left

(Figs. 8-104, 105, 106).

Essential points: When turning the right hand in, place the right hand in front of the right chest at the same time as turning the body to the left and pull the whip fully straight. When turning the body, move the whip horizontally to the left in preparation for circling horizontal circles.

2. Continue from the previous movement. Pivot on the balls of the feet and continue to turn the body 90 degrees to the left (facing west). At the same time hold the handle in the right hand and continue to move the whip horizontally to the left. Look ahead (Fig. 8-107).

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip body moves away from the right armpit, hold the handle in the right hand, raise it above the right shoulder, and circle the whip horizontally above the body. Look ahead (Figs. 8-108, 109).

Essential points: When circling the whip horizontally above the head, keep the whip moving as much as possible parallel to the ground.

4. Continue from the previous movement. With the whip moving in a horizontal circle over the head, move the right foot forward. Pivot on the balls of the feet and turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing east). At the same time, hold the handle in the right hand and sweep horizontally from above the head to the left behind the waist. Look ahead (Figs. 8-110, 111).

Essential points: Turning the body and sweeping the whip should be done simultaneously. In sweeping the whip, extend the right arm forward as much as possible so as to keep the whip parallel to the ground surface. The sweeping should be quick and powerful.

5. Continue from the previous movement. Continue to turn the torso 180 degrees to the left (facing west), pivot

Fig. 8-105

Fig. 8-106

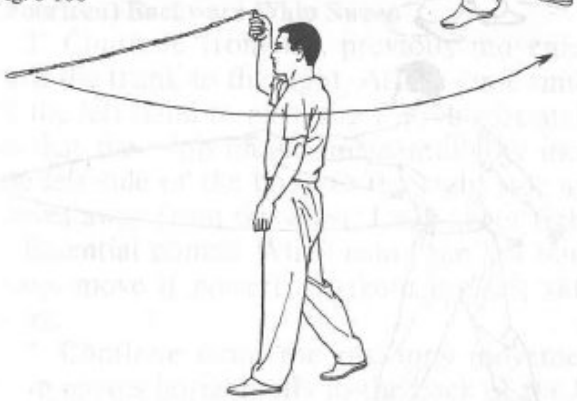


Fig. 8-107

Fig. 8-108

Fig. 8-109

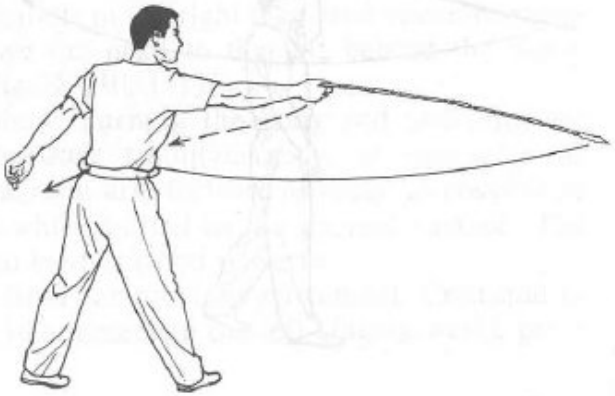


Fig. 8-110

on the soles of the feet, and stand with left leg bent at the knee after the body turn. At the same time, hold the handle in the right hand and continue to move the whip to sweep horizontally to the left side of the waist. Then, begin to circle the whip and sweep around from the left side of the waist to the right side of the waist. After the whip moves around the waist horizontally, use the back of the left hand to soften the arrival of the whip head at the left side of the waist. Look at the left hand (Fig. 8-112).

Note: The forward sweep calls for a body turn of 540 degrees. In the first turn of 180 degrees, move the whip from under the right armpit horizontally to the left and sweep it over the head. In the second turn of 180 degrees, move the whip horizontally to sweep around the part parallel to the waist. After the third turn of 180 degrees, the completion of the horizontal sweep ends in the tying of the whip sections around the waist. Because the whip twines while the body turns in the third turn of 180 degrees, the movement softens the momentum of the sweeping whip sections and at the same time creates conditions for softening and stopping the whip motion at the left side of the waist.

(Fourteen) Backward Whip Sweep

1. Continue from the previous movement. Twist and turn the trunk to the right. At the same time, use the back of the left hand to push the whip horizontally to the right so that the whip moves horizontally by momentum from the left side of the body to the right side and in this way moves away from the waist. Look lower right (Fig. 8-113).

Essential points: When using the left hand to push the whip, move it powerfully from the left side to the right front.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves horizontally to the back of the body, pivot on

Fig. 8-111

Fig. 8-112

the soles of the feet and turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing east). At the same time, hold the whip in the right hand and begin to swing it from the left side of the waist to the right and behind together with the body's turn to the right. Sweep the whip outward horizontally. Immediately move the left foot forward and stand with the feet apart, left foot ahead of the right foot. Look ahead to the right (Fig. 8-114).

Essential points: The left hand push of the whip and the right body turn should be coordinated. The backward whip sweep should be quick and powerful. Straighten the right arm as much as possible and swing it back from the left side to the right and behind.

3. Continue from the previous movement. Continue to turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing west). Move the right foot back while turning the body to the right. At the same time continue to use the right hand to circle the whip over the head horizontally. When it makes a circuit, turn the right hand with the whip in under the right armpit with the centre of the fist facing out and the thumb and forefinger facing back and move the whip by momentum from under the right armpit, across the back to above the left shoulder. At the same time, move the right foot forward and then move the left foot to the front of the right foot and straighten the right leg to bend the left at the knee forming the bow step. Use the left hand to meet the swinging whip in front of the left body and soften its arrival at the front of the left chest. Look at the left hand (Figs. 8-115, 116, 117).

Essential points: The backhand sweep should be coordinated with the right body turn. After the sweep makes a full turn, bend the right arm and raise the hand up to circle the whip for a horizontal turn over the head. This is intended to soften the force resulting from the backhand

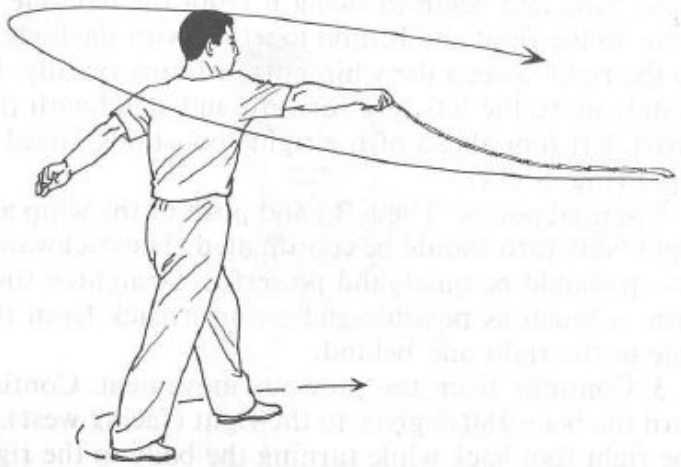


Fig. 8-113

Fig. 8-114

Fig. 8-115

Fig. 8-116

Fig. 8-117

sweep and to prepare for execution of the over-back whip with the bow step. The wrapping movements in the over-back whip exercise should be executed precisely at the desired position and the speed of motion of the whip should be properly controlled. In executing the backhand sweep, the whip movement of the right hand should be quicker than the right turn of the body.

Closing Form

1. Continue from the previous movement. The left hand pushes the whip to above and behind the body. Turn the right hand with the whip outward with the centre of the fist facing up and the thumb and forefinger facing out. Bend the arm in front of the right side of the body and then circle the whip clockwise from front to back. At the same time straighten up the left leg and move it half a step backward. Then stand on the left leg with the left toe on the ground. Then using the left foot to support the body weight, move the right foot forward shifting the body weight to the right leg with the left heel off the ground and ball of the foot on it. Look ahead (Figs. 8-118, 119).

Essential points: The whip push should be quick. Standing on the left leg and the circling of the whip with the right hand should be well coordinated. Keep circling in a vertical circle.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip moves clockwise in front of the body, straighten the right arm and stretch it forward with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing up so that the whip handle is held up slightly. Then withdraw the right hand and move the whip back by momentum. Use the ring and little fingers to hold the handle in the palm, and open the three other fingers, palm facing up, to catch the sections. At this time, move the right foot one step backward. Look at the nine-section whip (Figs. 8-120, 121).

Fig. 8-118

Fig. 8-119

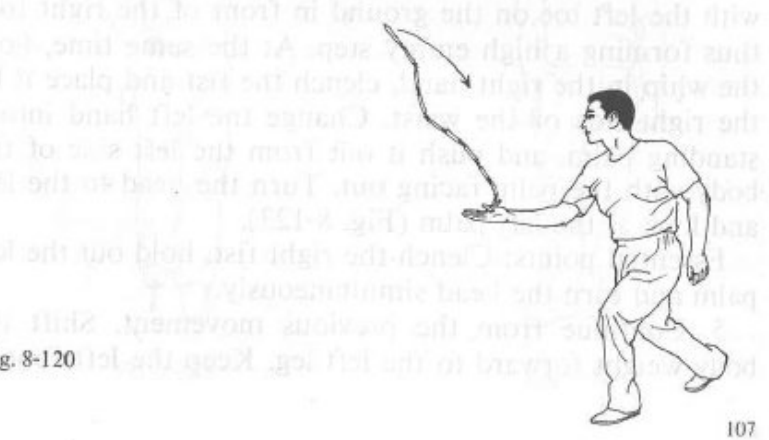


Fig. 8-120

Essential points: When the right hand holds the handle up the power should be used properly. The whip should be retrieved by momentum and the force point should be applied slowly to the whip head so that the whip is taken back into the hand section by section, starting from the first section linked to the handle. In the beginning, special attention should be paid to the fact that no abrupt force is exerted in raising the handle and taking the whip back or the whip head will spring back. In retrieving the whip, use the ring and little fingers to hold the handle and the three other fingers to hold the whip body. In catching the whip body the right hand should be extended forward and above from below so that the whip falls into the hand section by section. This movement requires good skill and therefore should be practised repeatedly.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the whip is caught up in the hand section by section, close the open fingers to hold the whip body. At the same time, bend the left leg forwad slightly and look at the right hand (Fig. 8-122).

4. Continue from the previous movement. Turn the body 90 degrees to the left (facing south). Move the right foot right behind the left heel keeping the right leg straight with the left toe on the ground in front of the right foot thus forming a high empty step. At the same time, hold the whip in the right hand, clench the fist and place it by the right side of the waist. Change the left hand into a standing palm, and push it out from the left side of the body with the palm facing out. Turn the head to the left and look at the left palm (Fig. 8-123).

Essential points: Clench the right fist, hold out the left palm and turn the head simultaneously.

5. Continue from the previous movement. Shift the body weight forward to the left leg. Keep the left foot in

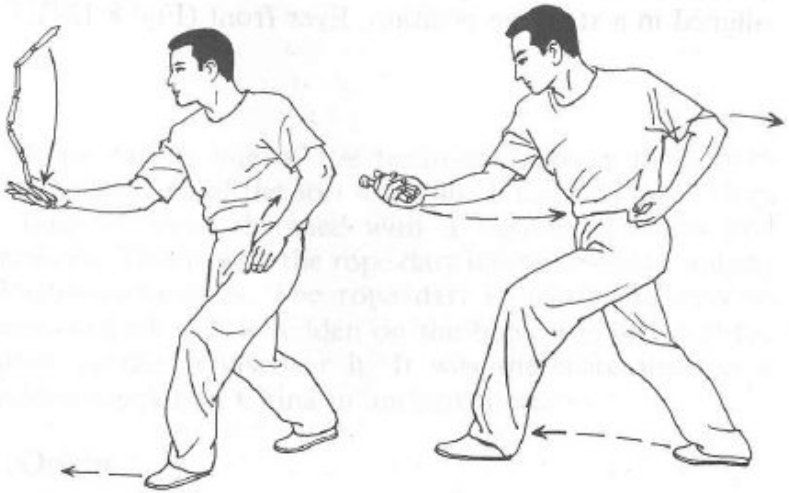


Fig. 8-121 Fig. 8-122

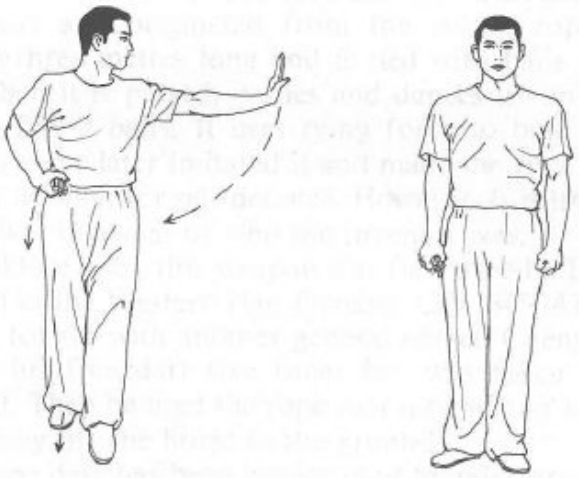


Fig. 8-123 Fig. 8-124

place, and move the right foot forward so that the feet are aligned in a standing position. Eyes front (Fig. 8-124).

Rope Dart

Rope dart is one of the traditional events in modern Wushu and one of the soft weapons. It can be played from a long or short distance with a variety of skills and methods. This is why the rope dart has won favour among Wushu enthusiasts. The rope dart is small and easy to carry and when it is hidden on the body it is difficult for other people to discover it. It was therefore used as a hidden weapon in China in ancient times.

1. Origin

The rope dart is also called the rope whip. It has a long history and its origin can be traced back to remote antiquity in China. It has evolved from the primitive stone fish dart and bone fish fork. The rope dart was used before the flying dart and originated from the cotton rope lasso which is three metres long and is tied with balls at both ends. When it is played, it flies and dances up and down like two flying balls. It uses tying force to bind an opponent. People later imitated it and made the rope dart as a hidden weapon for self defence. However, it is unknown when it was invented or who the inventor was.

As folklore goes, this weapon was first used by Du Mu, a general in the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-24). Once, when he fought with another general named Cheng Peng, he used his free dart five times but was taken by the opponent. Then he used the rope dart instead and knocked Cheng Peng off the horse to the ground.

The rope dart has been widely used by minority people in northern China since the Han Dynasty. It has been

favoured together with the cotton rope lasso, meteor hammer and flying talon. It was first used in other parts of China at the end of the Song Dynasty (960-1279) or at the beginning of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368). It became popular in the Ming Dynasty. Not only infantry and cavalrymen used it but also sailors. In water battles, the rope dart was used as a special weapon on the boats or after landing. In land battles it was an auxiliary weapon. In short, it can take the enemy by surprise or catch the enemy unprepared to win a battle.

The rope dart had been a powerful weapon as it could attack an enemy at a distance and be retrieved. However, after the emergence of the flying dart and other hidden weapons the rope dart was overshadowed. With the invention of guns and thus the disappearance of its military value, and with the difficulty of learning the methods of its movement, fewer and fewer people learned to use the rope dart. Only since the founding of the People's Republic of China has the rope dart become an event in the Wushu competition programme.

2. Structure

The rope dart is a weapon tied with a rope. It is an iron or steel dart head tied to a long cotton rope. It can be used for attack at a distance or up close. When it is not in use it can be hidden on the body.

It is composed of a dart head, rings and a rope. The head is a triangular prism, a pentangular prism, a hectangular prism or a circular cone. Most common is a triangular prism with a pointed head and a round tail made of pure iron. It is 13-23 centimetres long. At the end of the tail is a hole linked to a chain of three rings, the middle ring of which is linked with two other tinkling rings. The five rings are interlocked with each other, shaped like a

flower petal. The last ring is tied to a three-to-seven-metre-long rope. At the connection between the ring and the rope are several small coloured silk strips or a red tassel. At the other end of the rope is a handle, which is put on the wrist when the rope dart is played. Among some people rings are not used on the darts and the rope is directly tied through the hole in the dart.

The rope dart casing used in ancient times was a bamboo tube which was connected with the dart. It was 13 centimetres long and the rope was put through it. When the rope dart was not in use, it was folded in four and tied around the waist. At the end of the rope was a slipknot which was put at the left side while the dart head and the bamboo tube were hung at the right side of the waist. When it was used in an emergency, the knot was undone and the left hand held the rope end while the right hand held the bamboo tube. Then the dart could quickly be thrown. Nowadays, in routine Wushu practice it is not necessary to tie a long rope around the waist so only a shorter rope is needed. Depending on the height of the user, the rope is between three to four metres long. The dart head is also lighter, about 200 to 300 grams. The bamboo tube is no longer used. Most of the dart heads used are either tetrahedrons or cones (Fig. 2-1).

Based on my own experience, I suggest that the length of the rope dart should be: The practitioner puts the handle on the left wrist, grasps the rope in both hands pulling the rope straight and raises the hands horizontally to both sides with the rope hanging down and the dart head just touching the ground (Fig. 2-2).

3. Features of Movement

The methods of moving the rope dart are: twining, binding, circling, hitting, raising, piercing, retrieving, re-

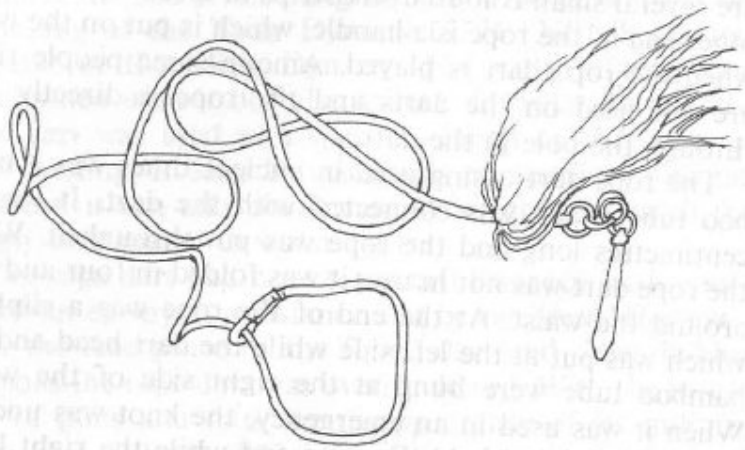


Fig. 2-1

Fig. 2-2

leasing, tightening, and carrying on the back and shoulders. Skilful use of the movements of the different joints of the body is required to quickly change the direction of the dart's movement. When it is circled vertically, it looks like a flying wheel. When it is thrown out, it darts forward like a flashing meteor. When it hits the opponent and is taken back, it looks like a working shuttle. The rope dart is used for attacking an opponent at both long and short distances and can be used both flexibly and with an accurate force point depending on the situation. It is a weapon for both physical fitness and self defence. Specifically speaking, it has the following features:

1. "Circle and curve" are the basic forms of movement for the rope dart. Twining is the basis of the circular and curved movement and the key to the effective use of the dart. A Chinese saying goes: "The whip is a rope which depends entirely on skilful twining and footwork. If the twining is not forceful, it is loose; and if it is done slowly, it becomes sluggish." "Skilful twining makes power flow smoothly and the dart flies like a missile." Both sayings are comments on the circular and curved movements of the dart. Therefore, the various methods of twining used to change the circular and curved movements of the dart head into the linear movement is precisely a characteristic feature of the study of rope dart techniques.

Circles are mainly divided into forward circles, backward circles, large circles, small circles, interlocked circles and spiral circles. The curve is a middle part of the various circular movements and linear movements. It is sub-divided into large curves and small curves. Circling must be close to the body, twining must be tight, and winding must be fast. Sticking and connecting must be put together while the body and the rope become one. The body turns with the changes of the circle, and footwork

follows the movements of the circles. When turning, there must seem to be an accelerated movement. Hand, eye and body techniques and footwork should be highly coordinated. This is a prerequisite for dart throwing. The various curved movements of the dart are also lines for the movement of the dart head. They are the links for changing the direction and power of the dart movement in "drawing and raising" and "piercing and releasing." "Drawing and raising" and "piercing and releasing" are two aspects of one movement. All movements should be properly connected. During practice, there should be obvious time and space conceptions and a sense of the use of the muscles. Only in this way can you borrow or generate power and follow the principles of mechanics—inertia and momentum.

2. The dart can be either released or taken back at both long and short distances and used with various methods and in all directions. It has a larger range of attack than any other weapon. It can be used as a short weapon if the rope is short or as a long weapon when the rope is long. It can attack from either the left or right side. The head, neck and elbow can all be used to help throw the dart and both the feet and knees are used to twine the dart. The dart is described as "being able to hit an opponent from above, and not difficult to attack from below." If the opponent guards against an attack from below, you can attack from above and if he guards against an attack from above, you can attack from below. The changes in the use of the dart are truly unpredictable. Therefore, rope dart is ranked first among the 36 hidden weapons used in ancient China.

The use of soft weapons calls for "first, power; second, change of figures; and third, smooth release and retrieval." There is an old saying: "To play the meteor hammer and whip skilfully, the key lies in the grasp of good skills in

releasing and retrieving them." All this shows that release and retrieval are not only the main requirements in the combat skills of the rope dart, but also precursors of the technical demonstration. Without flexibility in release and retrieval, there are no accurate shooting and twining movements. The key to the skillful release and retrieval of the dart lies in coordination between drawing and raising by the right and left hands and piercing and slipping by the right hand. The timing for the body's rise and fall is also very important, depending on the length of the rope. Proper twining and releasing by the left hand at the time of turning and changing are also important as required. In the course of retrieving and releasing, the long rope of the dart must always be straight and there should be no looseness or shaking. Movements should be connected but not loose, neat but not stiff. They follow one another without being separated.

3. The combination of hardness and softness is a characteristic feature and requirement of the technique of applying force to the rope dart. The rope is soft and the dart is hard. This requires dart combat techniques to be characterized by lightness and heaviness, hardness and softness. In speed, there is gradual power and abrupt power. In application of power, there is fast power, neat power, explosive power and combined power. In internal reflection, there is internal power, collecting power and silk winding power. Acceleration in throwing and turning the circling dart is caused by gradual power or combined force. Because of the increased momentum and the centrifugal force of the dart head, the soft rope moves like a steel staff. There is softness in hardness and hardness in softness. It is so powerful that it moves like a whirlwind and lightning. In releasing and retrieving, there should be collecting power and internal power. In throwing the dart

there must be combined power. And the instant when the dart head hits the target fast power shall be used. In pulling back the dart after attack, fast and neat power must be applied. When twining the dart around the joints of the body, there must be silk winding power. Combine the pulling power of the dart head with the resisting power of the twined joints skilfully to prepare for the collection of power for throwing the dart. If the power used in twining and winding is hardness in softness, the power used in throwing the dart is the fast force with softness in hardness.

In rope dart exercises, the movements must be hard but not stiff, soft but not loose and hardness must be combined with softness. Use the consciousness together with the regulation of the breathing to control the movements so as to integrate the internal with the external. As to the direction of power, when there is the front, there is the rear and when there is the left, there is the right. As to the amount and speed of power, use the waist as the axis and circle the dart when the axis turns. Power originates at the legs, gathers at the waist and takes shape at the dart head. In short, the fast power in throwing the dart is achieved through the varying changes in body posture in accordance with the characteristic features of rope dart techniques. It is more difficult to comprehend this power than that of the long and short distance weapons. Practitioners have to comprehend it through constant practice. "It takes a hundred days to learn to shoot the miraculous arrow, but a thousand days to learn to play the dart." Without a long period of practice, it is impossible to understand what power is.

4. Rules of Movement

Although the rope dart is played in various ways, there

are specific rules of movement. The main rule of movement is to change the circular movement in twining to the rectilinear movement of throwing the dart. Generally speaking, the finish of a previous movement is the start of the following movement. Every complete exercise of the rope dart routine is composed of three stages—twining and winding, throwing or releasing and pulling back or retrieving. If practitioners can grasp the technical links between the three stages correctly, it will be crucial to their skilfully and quickly grasping and improving their dart skills.

1. Twining. The circular movement of the rope dart is achieved mainly through twining which is, in turn, the preparation for shooting the dart. Twining is the first step in learning the technical movements of the rope dart. Whether you can grasp twining skills well directly affects the quality of your dart shooting. No matter which part of the body is twined in the process of twining, the circling must be round and vertical with the rope close to the body and with precise execution. To achieve this, the rope dart must be moved in a vertical circle perpendicular to and not far from the body. Otherwise, it undermines the circular movement of the rope dart perpendicular to the ground and changes the moving orbit of the rope dart, thus resulting in the failure of the technical movement and even possible injury. This is particularly important for beginners. Make sure that when the hand holding the rope dart circles it, the arm is close to the body, the forearm is not extended outward or away from the body and that only the wrist is extended slightly outward to circle the dart so as to be able to control it.

The twining movement should be executed at an even speed and with clear rhythms with the body and dart well coordinated. Twining must depend mainly on body sense

with only the eyes as assistance. At the same time, the twining must be a slipknot or it will be impossible to connect to the following movement. Twining speed is crucial to the release of the dart. It depends on the change of axis, namely the force point, in twining. Acceleration is achieved by reducing the radius while deceleration is achieved by buffering the circling or increasing the radius. In the exercise "Gold Silk Twines Arm," for example, the right hand holding the dart rope circles the dart from back to front on the right side of the body with the centre of the axis of the dart at the right hand. The circling speed of the rope dart is achieved by applying power with the right hand. When the right arm is extended outward and the rope twines the right arm, the axis of the dart moves from the right hand to the right arm with the force point now on the right arm. After releasing the dart, the right hand once again grips the rope and retrieves the dart, again circling it in a vertical circle on the right side of the body with the force point shifted back to the right hand. Making use of changes in the axis of the soft weapon to exert proper power to the rope dart at the proper time is an important means to increase one's ability to control the rope dart.

2. Shooting the dart. Dart shooting is crucial in learning dart play. After twining, the dart can be shot from the neck, elbow, leg, foot or directly from the hand. The flying speed of the dart must be quick, straight and flat like an arrow from the bow. Speed and power in shooting the dart are decided by the twining speed. When twining, the maximum centrifugal force must be achieved before shooting so that the dart can fly both quickly and powerfully after the shot. Whether the dart flies straight and flat is closely related to the twining and the timing of the shot. This means that the rope should not be twisted in the

process of twining, nor should it twine around the joints (especially the elbow joint) too much. Otherwise, the released dart will move spirally, or arch on its way forward. This is not good for control. The dart must be shot at the proper time, neither too early nor too late. If too late, it arrives high or ties the body part up; if too early, it arrives too low. The correct method is to shoot the dart at the instant in the course of twining that the dart head points in the direction of the shot. Timing for shooting is mainly decided by body sense.

3. Dart retrieval. Dart retrieval is the finish of the whole preceding movement, but also the start of a new movement or a repetition of the previous movement. After the dart is shot, the dart head falls to the ground as a result of gravity if it is not pulled back or retrieved. If the rope is not taken back at the proper time in the process of retriving the dart and the dart head falls to the ground, it will affect the smooth execution of the following movement. It is also important to grasp the timing for retrieval of the rope. After the dart is released, there must be tangential acceleration as a result of momentum and the dart head will be braked when it reaches its apex limited by the length of the rope. By this time, the dart must be already being taken back. In pulling back the rope, power should be continuously applied with no abrupt force exerted or the dart will come back at the practitioner because of the rebound from the abrupt force. Moreover, the right hand should not leave the rope when shooting the dart. Use the right thumb, forefinger and middle finger to form a hole through which the rope can slip freely. In this way, when retrieving the dart the rope is taken back into a fixed position in the palm and the dart does not touch the ground.

5. Stages for Practising Routines

In the traditional art of the rope dart, the chief forms of movement are routines. The steps for practising rope dart routines are divided into the following three phases:

First Stage: Lay the foundation

1. Practising *Chang Quan* (Long-style Boxing) as a basic exercise. To play the rope dart well it is necessary to first practise boxing. At the beginning do some exercises like rubbing the legs, bending or turning the waist, standing still and moving the arms to the left or right. Then do some exercises like kicking and boxing and finally play sabre, cudgel and other short or long weapons. Only on this basis can you start to practise rope dart exercises. If you have learned nine-section whip skills, you will find it easier to practise rope dart skills.

2. Get rid of fear and get to know the function of the rope dart. At the beginning practitioners have some fears because they do not know the technical performance of the rope dart. Therefore, they should first repeatedly practise both the long and short circling skills of the rope to a sufficient degree that they do not expose their elbows when raising the hand and that the rope is circled with a whistling sound. Then combine it with footwork and body turns and make sure that the rope circles close to the body no matter how the body turns and thus raise the ability to control the rope dart. Make sure that the dart is circled forehand and backhand with great ease on all sides of the body and that the body and hands move harmoniously with the body and dart become one. Finally, repeatedly practise the movements of shooting and retrieving the dart. In other words, the right hand holds the middle part of the rope and shoots it forward or backward after moving it in a vertical circle and returns to the vertical circling movement when retrieving the rope. Make sure

that the retrieving, shooting, circling and turning are all executed by momentum and with great skill and freedom. Gradually get rid of fear by repeatedly practising the basic methods and techniques of the rope dart so as to lay a good foundation for learning the next phase.

Second Stage: Grasp the characteristic features and rules of dart twining and shooting.

1. Do the exercises for twining all joints without shooting the dart. This is mainly intended to solve these problems: the proper lengths of rope left, the accurate location of the positions in twining the joints, the force points and speed of twining, the route of twining and the shape, height and angle of the body parts in twining.

2. Repeatedly do the single movement exercises in twining, shooting and retrieving the dart. Whether simple or complex, all technical movements of the rope dart are composed of three parts—twining, dart shooting and dart retrieval. Therefore, every technical movement can be practised repeatedly to understand the smooth power used in circling, twining, hitting and shooting as well as the rules of circular and tangential movements, the general characteristic features of twists and turns around the limbs and waist, the direction of movement of the dart and the force and rational twining of all joints. In the course of practice you should not be satisfied simply with an ability to shoot the dart. Stress should be laid on the integrity of the application of power and the accuracy of the methods used.

3. Practise simple combinations: After practising single movements for a while go on to practise combinations of movements. For example, twine the dart around the left foot or right foot, shoot the dart after circling the dart with the left or right bent elbow, or the elbow carrying dart, Prodigal Kicks Ball and Cross on Back. Practise the

smooth connection of the movements between the coming and going of the dart head more. In starting a transfer, do empty circling for one or two circuits so as to regulate the speed and direction of the connection. After doing combinations skilfully, continue to do the whole exercise including drawing, raising, retrieving and shooting.

Third Stage: Grasp the connections between the movements and the change of power as well as the relationship between the movements, breathing and consciousness.

1. Practise part by part. First practise part by part according to serial routine connections with stress on the difficult points in the connections. In every practice, you must succeed once, twice or more raising the rate of success every day. First put more work on the connections between the movements and then improve the application of power, breathing and posture so as to combine mind, energy, power, form and methods organically.

2. Practise the complete routine. Each time, before practising the complete routine, do the single exercises and combinations and then practise the complete routine part by part. In practising the complete routine, you are required to concentrate your mind and to use your mind to guide the application of power so that power is applied through movement, the connections are complete and every dart shot is steady, accurate and clean.

6. Principles of Practice

1. Proceed from easy to hard and step by step.

In practising the rope dart you must follow the principle of proceeding from easy to hard and step by step. When circling and twining, for example, you must do it first slowly and then quickly, increasing the power gradually. First practise singles and then combinations, first with fixed step and then with moving step. As you improve

your skills, you can raise your standards and increase the degree of difficulty. Because it is more difficult to learn the rope dart, you are apt to hurt youself before you grasp the rules of movement and inertia. Therefore, beginners should replace the dart head with a small sand bag or cover the dart head with a thick layer of soft material to help you reduce the psychological pressure. Use the standard rope dart after you have a better understanding of the space, time and speed needed for the play of the rope dart.

2. Practise perseveringly.

There are old sayings in Chinese Wushu circles: "Stop practising for one day, it seems like three years," and "Constant practice makes you feel relaxed." The rope dart is the longest soft weapon and therefore its techniques and methods put a higher demand on space, time, distance and body sense in shooting, retrieving, twining and hitting than the other weapons. Only when you persist in constant practice can you grasp the rules and understand the principles. Only when you have become skilful can you proceed from imitation to creation.

3. Combine practice with thought.

In learning the rope dart it is important to practise, but it is even more important to think. It is important to make clear the line of movement, the body parts to be twined, the number of times to twine, the relationship between the body and the rope and the connection between movements. It is also important to make a good analysis of the body sense and the characteristic features of each movement and to learn the differences possible in application of power, speed, height of the body parts twined and direction. Only in this way can you discover the general and individual characters and play the dart with great ease and freedom.

In summing up, although it is more difficult to grasp

the rope dart skills than those of other hard weapons, practitioners can grasp them once they grasp the characteristic features and rules of movement of the weapon and then persevere in their practice.

7. Routines

Preparatory Form

First put the handle of the rope dart on the left wrist, and then leave the length of rope needed for the starting exercise slack, and twine the remainder around the left palm. Fold the slack part into three and use the forefinger, middle finger, ring finger and little finger to hold it. Then stand with feet together facing the south, rope dart hanging by the left side of the body. Concentrate internally, with the energy flowing to Dantian (a part of the human body about 10 centimetres down from the navel). Look ahead (Figs. 7-1A, B).

Essential points: The rope dart movements include twining, winding, circling, hitting, raising, piercing, retrieving, releasing, tightening, carrying on back and carrying on shoulder. During the practice, the practitioner is required to be able to skilfully use the movements of the joints of the body to quickly change the direction of the motion of the rope dart. Although the play of the dart varies in a multitude of ways, the principal rule of movement is to change the circular movement of twining to the rectilinear movement of shooting the dart. In executing movements, the left part of the ropes is needed to ensure the smooth twining and shooting of the dart. If the left part is too long, it not only affects the twining speed but will also allow the dart head to touch the ground. If the left part of the rope is too short, it will be inadequate in providing the correct length of rope but will also affect the smooth execution of the movements. It is clear that the

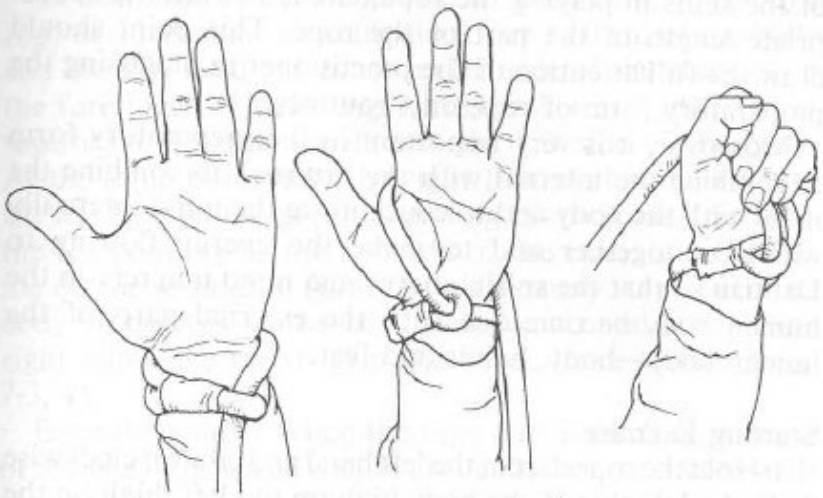


Fig. 7-1A

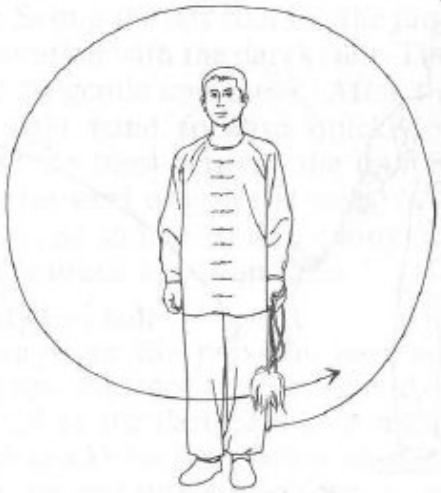


Fig. 7-1B

length of the left part of the rope should be appropriate depending on the need for twining and dart release. One of the skills in playing the rope dart is leaving the appropriate length of the part of the rope. This point should draw the full attention of the practitioner in practising the preparatory form of rope dart routines.

Moreover, it is very important in the preparatory form to combine the internal with the external, to combine the mind with the body and to concentrate the mind internally with feet together and to make the energy flowing to Dantian so that the spirit, energy and mind inherent in the human body become one with the external parts of the human body—body, hands and feet.

Starting Exercise

1. Hold the rope dart in the left hand and circle it clockwise from the left side of the body high on the left, high on the right and then down on the right to form a circle in front of

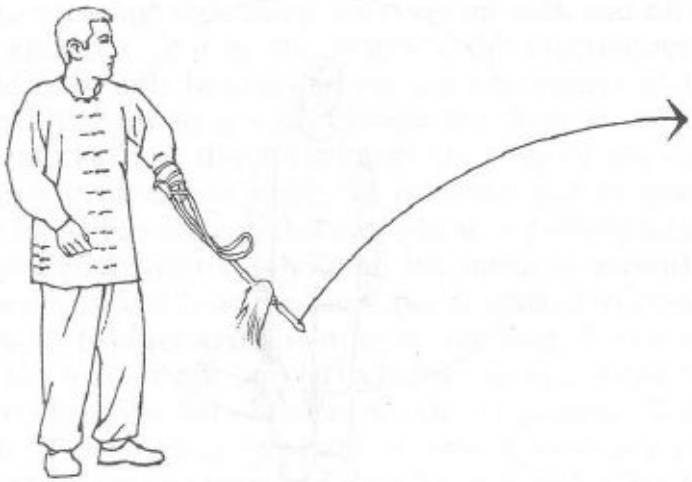


Fig. 7-2

the body. At the same time, turn the body slightly to the left. Look to the left side of the body (Fig. 7-2).

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart has made a circuit clockwise in front of the body and the dart head moves to the left side of the body, open the forefinger, middle finger, ring finger and little finger together and throw the dart to the left side of the body. At the same time, raise the right foot slightly and stamp the left foot on the ground, landing on the right foot with the toe pointing to the left side of the body and the left toe on the ground to form the high empty step. Turn the body 90 degrees to the left (facing east) and stretch the right hand quickly to grip the rope. Look ahead (Figs. 7-3, 4).

Essential points: When the rope dart is circling in front of the body, the speed should gradually be accelerated with the arm stretched as fully as possible. When the rope has moved one and half circles with the dart head pointing to a horizontal line on the left side of the body, shoot the dart immediately. Stamp the left foot for the jump and turn the body in cooperation with the dart's shot. The change to the jump should be gentle and quick. After the dart is shot, stretch the right hand forward quickly with the palm facing up and the bend between the thumb and the forefinger facing forward to grip the rope. All movements in the whole exercise should be well coordinated, with good coordination between hands and feet.

(One) Prodigal Plays Ball

1. Continue from the previous movement. After the right hand grips the rope, retrieve the dart immediately and use the fall of the dart head as a result of gravity to circle the dart clockwise from below to and in front to the rear and then up and forward to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, keep the left

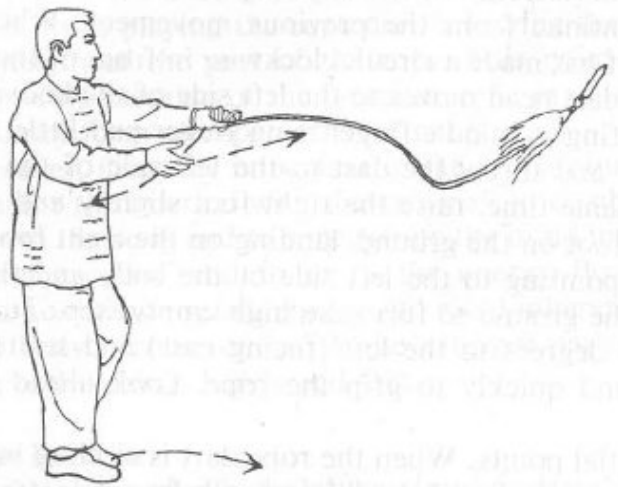


Fig. 7-3

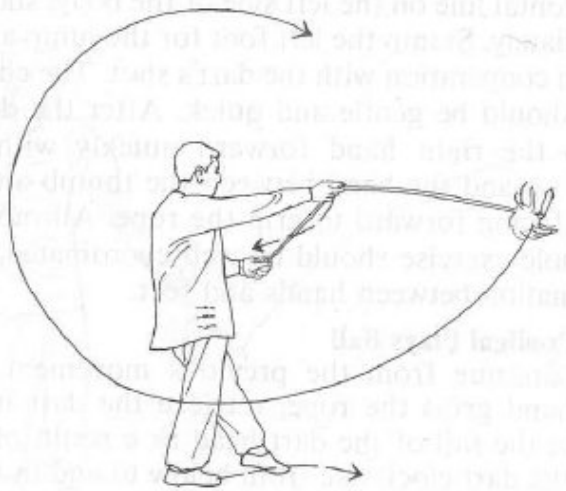


Fig. 7-4

foot firmly on the ground, move the right foot one step forward and shift the body weight forward with the left heel raised and the toe on the ground. Look ahead (Fig. 7-5).

2. Continue from the previous movement. After the rope dart held by the right hand has circled two times with the dart head above the body, bend the left leg and raise it with the toe facing the right side of the body. Bend the right leg slightly to support the body weight. Look ahead and down (Fig. 7-6).

3. Continue from the previous movement. The right hand holding the rope retrieves it and twines it on the left toe. Look at the left toe (Fig. 7-7).

4. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope has twined from the left instep to the left sole, stamp and move the left foot quickly forward. At the same time, use the left foot to kick the dart forward with the left toe facing front. Keep the right hand on the rope. Look in the direction the dart is being released (Figs. 7-8, 8A).

Essential points: When the right hand is stretched forward to grip the rope after the shot in the starting exercise, use the left hand holding the rope end to pull the rope dart back and the right hand to immediately grip the rope so that the part of the rope left behind the right hand is the precise length needed for the following movement. The two hands should be well-coordinated. After holding the rope, the right hand should circle it clockwise and forward to form a vertical circle and thereby connect to the following movement after circling two or three times. While circling the dart in vertical circles, adjust the other parts of the body properly in preparation for the following movement. When the left foot is raised to "play the ball," the toe should be turned in. The part of the left foot to be twined by the rope should be extended to the outer side of

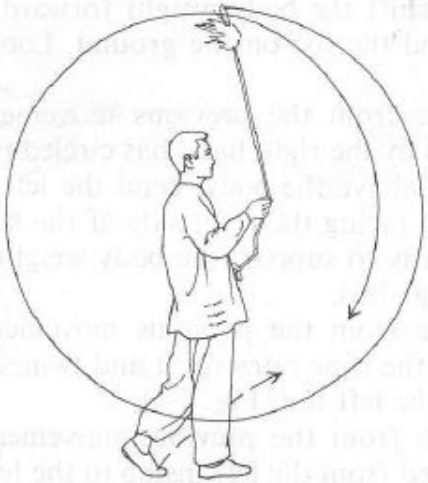


Fig. 7-5

Fig. 7-6

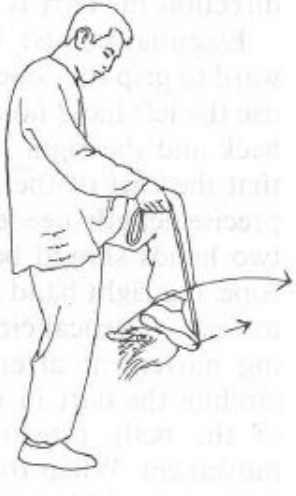


Fig. 7-7

the right foot to ensure the smooth execution of the twining movement. The circling by the right hand should be downward and as close to the left knee as possible to ensure the accurate location of the dart in twining. About

Fig. 7-8

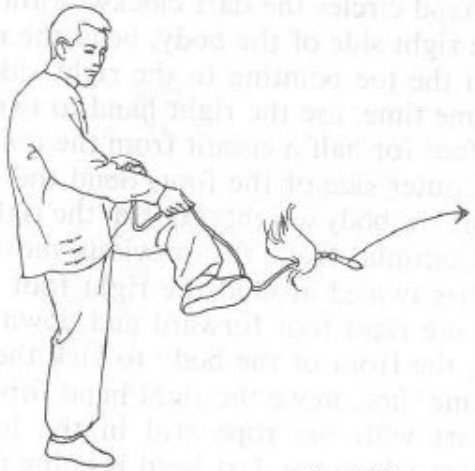


Fig. 7-8A

one fifth of the left foot should be twined. Make sure that the dart does not twine beyond that or it will affect the dart shot. Once the rope touches the left instep, immediately move the left foot down to kick the dart or there will be the possibility of having the left foot twined by the rope. The timing for the twining and dart shooting should be felt depending mainly on body sense. This movement is the most fundamental movement in rope dart routines. It should be practised repeatedly and be used to understand and grasp the technical performance and characteristic features of movement of the rope dart.

5. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope becomes straight after shooting, use the right hand to retrieve the dart and circle it clockwise down, backward, up and to the rear and up to the front to form a vertical circle. At the same time, move the left foot one step forward and shift the body weight forward to the left leg with the right heel raised and ball on the ground. Look ahead (Fig. 7-9).

6. Continue from the previous movement. After the right hand circles the dart clockwise through two circuits on the right side of the body, bend the right leg and raise it with the toe pointing to the right side of the body. At the same time, use the right hand to twine the toes of the right foot for half a circuit from the inner side of the foot to the outer side of the foot. Bend the left leg slightly to support the body weight. Look at the right foot (Fig. 7-10).

7. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope has twined around the right foot for half a circuit, move the right foot forward and downward with the toe facing the front of the body to kick the dart forward. At the same time, move the right hand forward to help shoot the dart with the rope still in the hand. Look in the direction where the dart head is going (Fig. 7-11).

Fig. 7-9

Fig. 7-10

Fig. 7-11

Essential points: The twining around the right foot should be executed precisely to ensure the accuracy of the dart shot. When the right foot is used to shoot the dart, the hands and feet should be well-coordinated. Time the shot well. There should be some time for twining before shooting the dart. When shooting the dart, the stamp of the foot should be executed with the twining. There should be no abrupt stamping or it will affect the control of the rope dart. In shooting the dart, the right hand should hold the rope tightly. This is a basic movement in rope dart routines and should be practised repeatedly.

8. Continue from the previous movement. When the right foot kicks the dart forward to send it straight, the right hand then pulls back the rope and by momentum starts the rope dart circling clockwise from the front down, back, behind the body, up and then to above and the front to form a vertical circle. At the same time, move the right foot forward and shift the body weight forward with the left heel raised and the ball of the foot on the ground. Look forward and up (Fig. 7-12).

9. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart is circled clockwise to forward and above the body, bend the right leg slightly to support the body weight. Bend the left leg and raise it, bringing it forward with the left foot turned in and the instep facing forward and the toe pointing to the right side of the body. At the same time, hold the rope dart in the right hand and execute the twining movement from above the body to the left foot. Look at the left foot (Fig. 7-13).

10. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope has twined clockwise from the instep of the left foot to the sole through one and a half circuits, stamp the left foot down to kick the dart forward with the toe pointing to the front of the body. Look at the dart head (Figs. 7-14A, B).

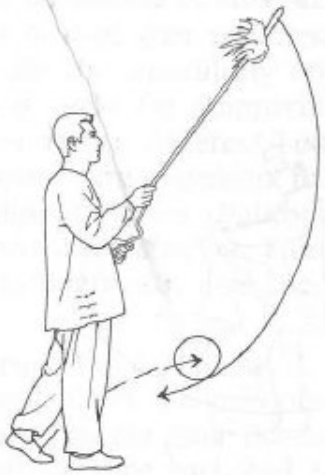


Fig. 7-12

Fig. 7-13

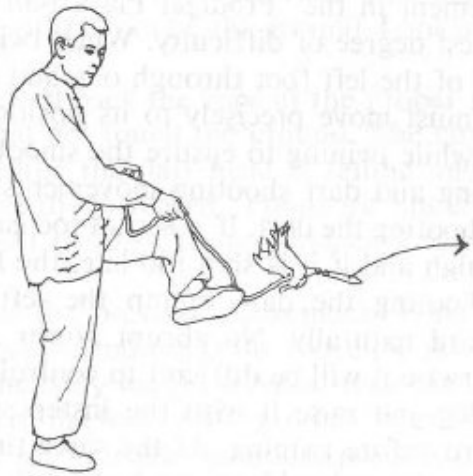


Fig. 7-14A

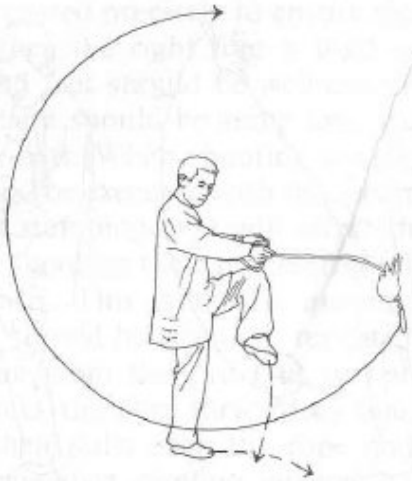


Fig. 7-14B

Essential points: The twining of the rope dart around the left foot for the release of the dart is the technical movement in the "Prodigal Plays Ball" exercise with the greatest degree of difficulty. When twining the front one third of the left foot through one and a half circuits, the dart must move precisely to its positions. Swing the left foot while twining to ensure the smooth execution of the twining and dart shooting movements. Study the timing for shooting the dart. If it is shot too early, the dart is sent too high and if it is shot too late, the foot will be bound. In shooting the dart, stamp the left foot and kick it forward naturally. No abrupt power should be exerted. Otherwise it will be difficult to control the dart. Bend the left leg and raise it with the instep straight and turned inward before twining. At the same time, stretch the left foot to the right side of the body with the instep crossing the right leg.

Moreover, the twining of the rope dart around the left foot for dart shooting is also one of the basic technical movements in rope dart routines. Coordination between hands and feet is particularly important. Practising this movement is good for improving the cooperation and coordination among different body parts in execution of the movements. In executing this technical movement, bend the supporting leg slightly so as to keep the body stable and to avoid swinging. This will play a positive part in improving the functions of the human body's organs of balance.

(Two) Boat Pushed by the Current

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope becomes straight after the dart is shot, use the right hand to pull the rope back and circle the dart clockwise from low in front, back and up to above and the front forming a vertical circle. At the same time, move the left foot forward. In the course of circling, move the right foot forward and shift the body weight forward, with the left heel off and the sole of the foot on the ground. Look ahead (Fig. 7-15).

Essential points: Pull back the rope at the proper time. The dart head should not touch the ground. The circling should be started while the dart head is falling and the speed should be evenly increased. Footwork should be coordinated well with the circling to produce a sense of harmony.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart head moves to above and the front, move the left foot forward and shift the body weight forward with the right heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground. At the same time, hold the rope in the right hand and press it under the right armpit with the palm facing backward and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing in. Extend

the right elbow outward and lean the head a bit towards the right shoulder. Throw and twine the rope dart from the front of the body back and then the right side of the body and under the right armpit to above the left shoulder in the front. Look over the left shoulder (Fig. 7-16).

Essential points: When the rope dart is thrown from under the right armpit to above the left shoulder, it moves in an oblique circle instead of a vertical circle. Therefore, the inner force for the oblique circle should be exerted to the rope dart when it is held in the right hand under the right armpit. Lean the head a bit towards the right shoulder in order to ensure the smooth execution of the throwing movement. Hold the rope under the right armpit and turn the head simultaneously. In executing this movement, the rope dart must be thrown and moved precisely to the positions at a speed slower than circling.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart is moved from under the right armpit to the left shoulder with the dart head above the shoulder, the right hand immediately moves off the rope and upward to above the left shoulder with the palm facing in and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing up to catch the rope coming from behind the body. Then draw back the right hand and move the dart clockwise from up to down in front of the body and to the lower back and then to up back to form a verticle circle. At the same time, use the left forefinger to hold the rope between the right hand and left shoulder on the left chest with the palm facing in and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing up. In the course of executing this movement, move the right foot forward and shift the body weight forward with the left heel off and the toe on the ground. Look ahead (Figs. 7-17A, B).

Essential points: With the right hand holding the rope under the right armpit, press the bend between the thumb and forefinger against the right ribs. In throwing the rope dart, the speed should be properly controlled, taking care

Fig. 7-15

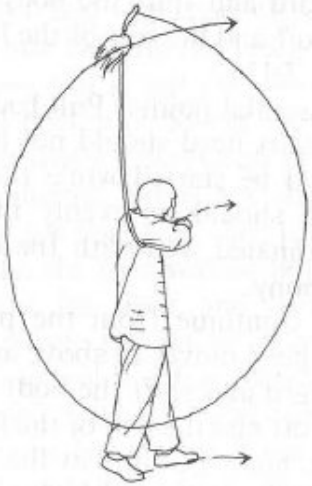


Fig. 7-16

Fig. 7-17A

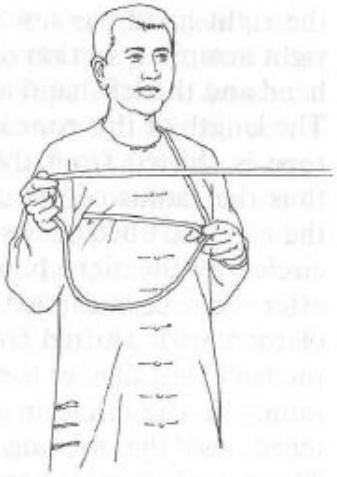


Fig. 7-17B

not to throw it too quickly. Otherwise, when the rope is carried on the left shoulder the speed of twining is suddenly quickened as the radius of the rope dart becomes shorter. If it is not properly controlled, it will have a bad effect on the smooth execution of the movement. The throwing and twining are executed between the right armpit and the back and the practitioner cannot see it with his own eyes, so timing and execution will depend mainly on body sense as a guide. After the right hand moves off the rope, stretch it quickly forward to the front and above the left shoulder to accurately grip the rope. The left forefinger holds the rope and the right hand pulls it back and circles it simultaneously. At the same time, move the right foot gently forward and keep the body weight stable.

In executing the movement, there are two obvious changes in the moving speed of the rope dart: The first change takes place when the rope dart is thrown to under the right armpit and the right hand moves off the rope. When the rope is not yet carried on the left shoulder and the right hand has not yet moved off the rope under the right armpit, a section of the rope is left between the right hand and the left hand and is pulled tight by the dart head. The length of this rope is increased (namely the axis of the rope is shifted from the right hand to the left hand and thus the radius of the circle is enlarged and the speed of the rope dart becomes slower than when the rope is being circled by the right hand. The second change takes place after the rope is carried on the left shoulder when the axis of the dart is shifted from the left hand to the armpit, to the back and to over the left shoulder. At this moment the radius of the circle in which the dart is moving is shortened and the moving speed of the dart is quickened. Therefore, practitioners should relate the change of the axis of the moving dart to a change in the moving speed

of the dart to ensure smooth execution of the technical movement. (As to the conception of the axis of the circular movement of the soft weapons, please refer to the chapter in the Nine-Section Whip titled "Relation between Speed and Force Points").

4. Continue from the previous movement. Hold the rope in the right hand and circle the dart clockwise twice to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. When the dart head moves forward to above the body, turn the body 90 degrees to the left (facing north) and stand with feet apart. At the same time, extend the right elbow outward and hold the rope under the right armpit. At this time, move the dart on the right side of the body, forward and down, to behind the body and then up to rear above. Look ahead and down (Fig. 7-18).

Essential points: Turn the body to the left quickly and resolutely. The gripping of the rope under the right armpit must be quick. The above two movements should be done simultaneously. When the rope is under the right armpit, the right armpit should help move the dart with the turning of the body. Attention should be paid that the right hand should not move off the rope or let it loose.

5. Continue from the previous movement. Continue to turn the body 90 degrees to the left (facing west), move the right foot forward and shift the body weight forward to the right leg with the left heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground. At the same time, hold the rope in the right hand and circle the dart clockwise on the right side of the body from below and behind the body, to the front of the body and backward again. Look ahead (Fig. 7-19).

Essential points: The left body turn in these movements should be quick and fluid without interruption. The whole turn is 180 degrees. After the turn, the length of the rope left between the two hands should be slightly greater than

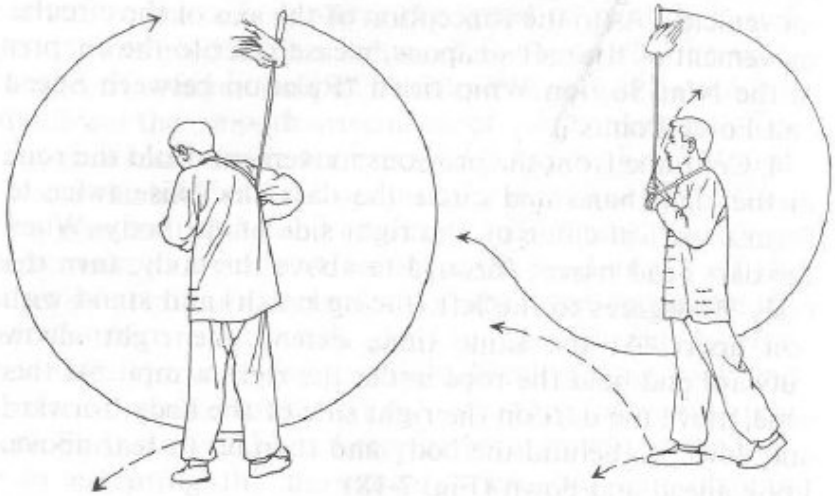


Fig. 7-18 Fig. 7-19

the width of the shoulders of the practitioner so that the dart shooting movement can be smoothly executed.

6. Continue from the previous movement. Hold the rope in the right hand and continue to circle the dart clockwise and backwards from above and in front of the body to behind the body and then forward again. At the same time, move the left foot forward and shift the body weight to the left leg. When the dart head moves clockwise from behind the body to above and in front of the body, hold the rope in the right hand and move it around the right upper arm so that the rope twines backward from above the right upper arm to under the right armpit. At the same time bend both elbows, raise them up and move the rope between the two hands over the head from the front of the chest to behind the neck. At the same time, raise the right leg upward keeping the right instep flat, leaning the torso backward and also bending the left leg slightly to support

the body weight. Look ahead (Figs. 7-20A, B).

Essential points: The twining movement should be executed accurately to the correct positions. Twine the rope from above the right shoulder backward to under the right armpit and simultaneously move the rope between the two hands over the head to behind the neck, coordinating this action with the raising of the right leg. This movement involves a certain degree of difficulty. Beginners are permitted to practise the movement without raising the right leg up at the beginning. Keep both feet in their original positions and execute the movement of raising both hands up and over the head to the neck behind the head and twining the dart around the right shoulder to shoot the dart. When these movements are executed with proficiency, start to practise the movement of raising the right leg to shoot the dart.

7. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope moves backward from above the right shoulder and then downward to under the right armpit, and when the dart head moves clockwise from above the body to behind the body and along the right side of the body in the direction the dart shoots in front of the body, the right hand holding the rope should move off the rope at the proper time. At that same time, the left forefinger also moves off the rope so that the dart is shot forward. At the same time, put the right leg down and land the right foot in front of the body and stand with the feet apart, the right foot ahead of the left foot. After the right hand moves off the rope, stretch it forward quickly to grip the rope again in coordination with the landing of the right leg. Look in the direction the dart is released (Fig. 7-21).

Essential points: The timing for shooting the dart should be sensed both visually and physically. Landing the right foot in front of the body and stretching the right

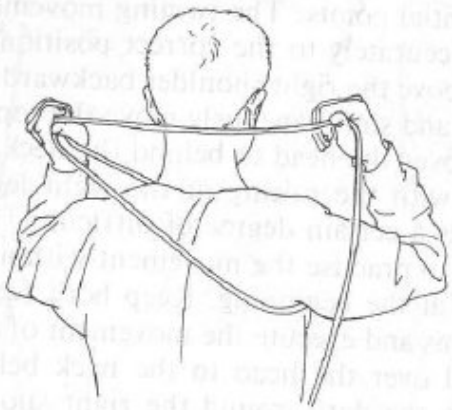


Fig. 7-20A

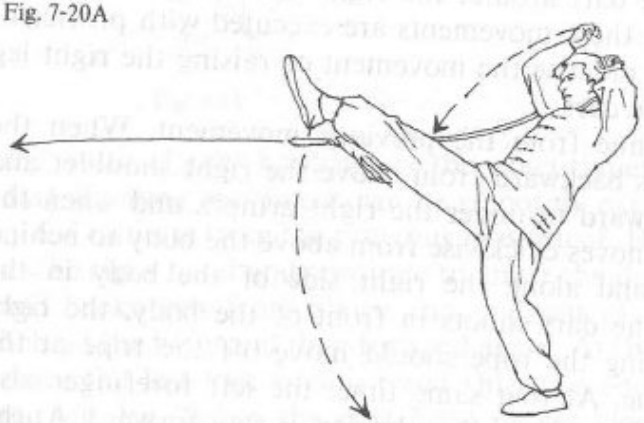


Fig. 7-20B

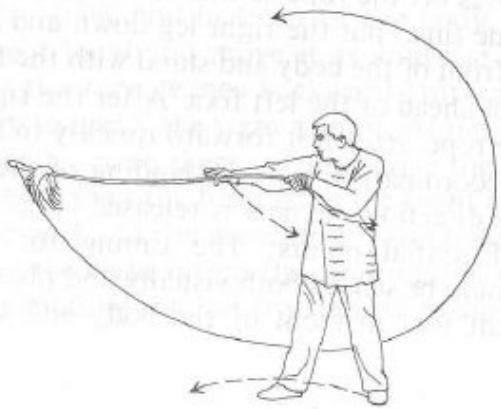


Fig. 7-21

hand to grip the rope should be well coordinated. Gripping the rope by the right hand should be quick and accurate. In gripping the rope, the right little finger side faces forward and the bend between the thumb and the forefinger side faces the body. The rope should become a straight line after shooting.

(Three) Golden Silk Twines Arm

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the right hand stretches forward to grip the rope after shooting, bend the arm immediately to retrieve the dart and circle the dart counter-clockwise before the body downward, then behind the body and finally up and in front of the body to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, move the left foot forward and shift the body weight forward with the right heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground. Look ahead (Fig. 7-22).

Essential points: When the right hand retrieves the dart, make good use of the falling force after the dart head reaches its zenith. When the speed begins to change from slow to fast increase the speed evenly. There should be no abrupt force in pulling back the dart to avoid the dart's bouncing back and hurting the practitioner. At the same time, when the right hand retrieves the rope, raise the arm and hand upward and then swing the right arm while the dart head falls so that the rope dart is moved in a vertical circle.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When moving the rope dart in a vertical circle counterclockwise on the right side of the body, move the right foot forward and then move the left foot forward and stand with the feet apart, the left foot ahead of the right foot. At the same time, when the dart head moves above and in front of the body, bend the right arm and extend it outward horizontally holding the rope in the right hand on the right chest

with the palm facing down and the bend between the thumb and the forefinger facing the right side of the chest. Make use of the circling momentum of the rope dart to twine the rope around the right arm twice from the lower side of the right elbow to the upper side of the right elbow. Look at the right elbow joint (Figs. 7-23 A, B).

Essential points: First of all, the twining of the rope around the right elbow should be accurate. The part to be twined should be the front part, the upper one third of the upper arm. When twining, press the forearm tightly against the upper arm to narrow the angle between them to ensure the smooth execution of the twining motion. Moreover, swing the elbow joint in the twining direction to exert force to the dart at the proper time.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope twines twice around the right elbow and with the dart head approaching the direction of the dart's shot, turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing east). At the same time, move the right elbow to the right with the elbow joint facing the direction of the dart's shot and shoot the dart forward. At the same time, move the right leg one step forward after turning the body to the right, straighten the left knee and bend the right leg forward to form the right bow step. Look at the dart head (Fig. 7-24).

Essential points: When shooting the dart, use the right elbow to move the rope dart to the right with the body turned to the right. At the same time, send the right elbow joint forward in the direction of the shot to ensure the smooth execution of the dart shot and to ensure that the rope becomes straight after shooting. The right hand should not move off the rope, but the fingers should form a hole through which the rope can slip freely. In forming the right bow step, do not keep the right leg too firm on the ground.

Fig. 7-22

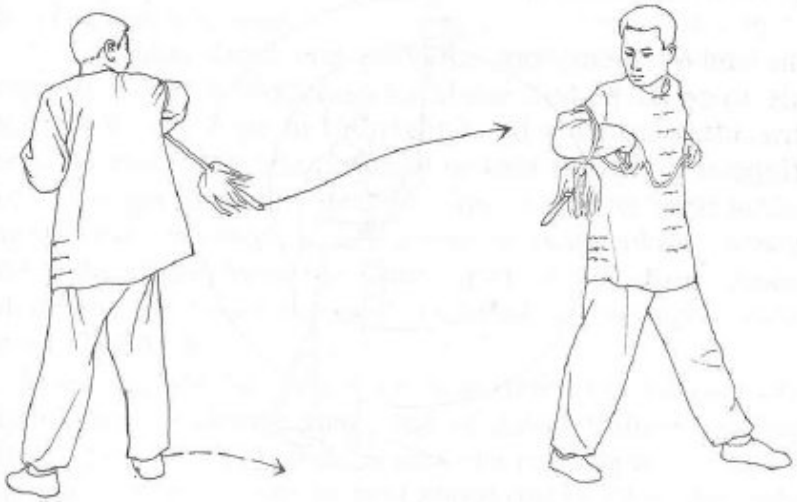


Fig. 7-23A

Fig. 7-23B

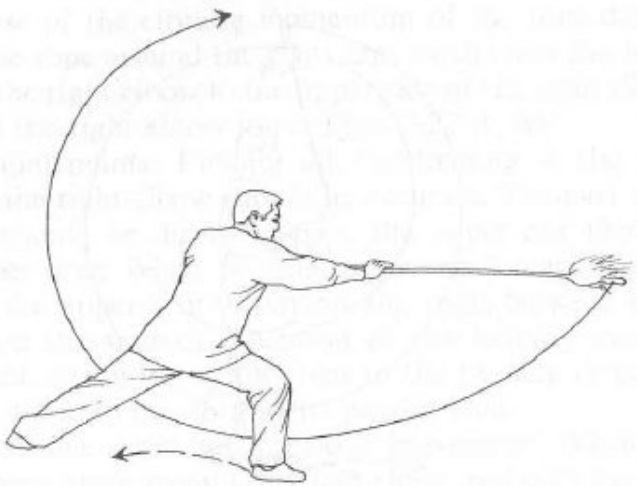


Fig. 7-24

Fig. 7-25

4. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the rope becomes straight after shooting, use the right hand to retrieve the rope. At the same time, turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing west), and circle the dart clockwise on the right side of the body from low to high and in front of the body and then to behind the body to form a vertical circle while turning the body. At this time, stand with the feet apart, the left foot ahead of the right foot and look ahead and up (Fig. 7-25).

Essential points: When retrieving the dart, keep the knee straight and withdraw the right leg slightly by using its force of reaction to form a bow step. When retrieving the rope dart, bend the elbow and raise the rope dart up while turning the body to the left and moving the dart in a vertical circle clockwise. In retrieving the dart, make sure that the dart head does not touch the ground. Stamping the foot, withdrawing the right leg, turning the body to the left and retrieving the dart should be executed harmoniously and be well coordinated. The movements should be quick, clean and neat.

5. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart moves clockwise to above and in front of the body, hold the rope in the right hand with the right arm bending and extending outward so that the elbow is parallel to the ground. At the same time, hold the rope in the right hand and move it clockwise to twine twice around the right elbow from the upper part of the elbow down. Move the right foot forward, and look at the right elbow (Figs. 7-26A, B).

Essential points: When twining the dart around the right elbow clockwise, make use of momentum in circling the dart in a vertical circle so that the twining is accurately executed. It should not go past about one third of the right upper arm. When holding the rope in the right hand

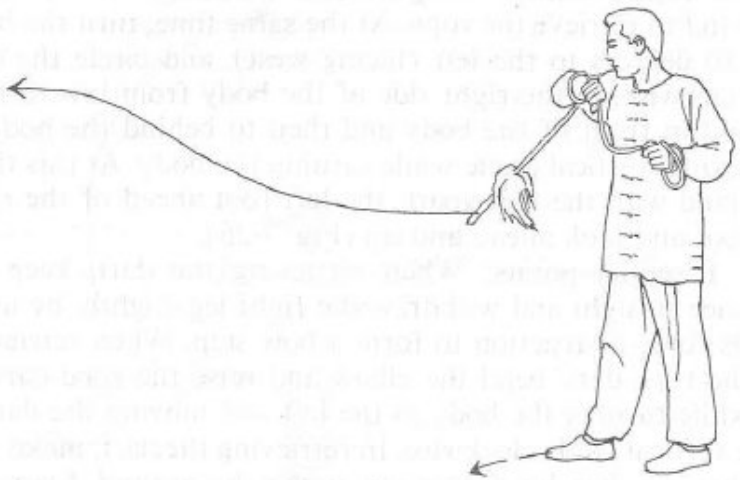


Fig. 7-26A

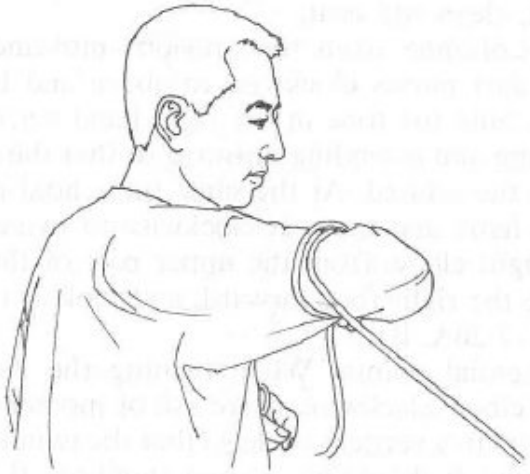


Fig. 7-26B

narrow the angle between the upper arm and the forearm as much as possible and extend the elbow outward. In the process of twining, it is permissible to swing the right elbow in the direction of the twining so as to exert force to the dart. Make the twining speed even in the whole process and avoid exerting abrupt force so as to control the dart even better.

6. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart twines twice around the right elbow and with the dart head approaching the direction in which the dart will be shot turn the torso slightly to the left with the right elbow inward and the elbow joint pointing in the direction of the shot, and shoot the dart forward. Look in the direction of shot (Fig. 7-27).

Essential points: There should be some time before shooting the dart. Shoot the dart straight and flat. In shooting the dart, turn the torso to the left and extend the right elbow forward in a coordinated way. The right hand holding the rope should not move off the rope, but form a hole made up of thumb, forefinger and middle finger through which the rope can slip freely. At the same time, the left hand should stretch forward so that the rope is fully released.

7. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the rope becomes straight after shooting, withdraw the left hand, bend the elbow and place it by the left side of the body. At the same time, bend the right elbow to retrieve the dart. Hold the rope in the right hand and circle the dart counterclockwise on the right side from low and in front of the body to high and behind and then forward up and in front of the body. At the same time, turn the torso slightly to the right (facing west), and look ahead and up (Fig. 7-28).

Essential points: When retrieving the dart, pull the rope

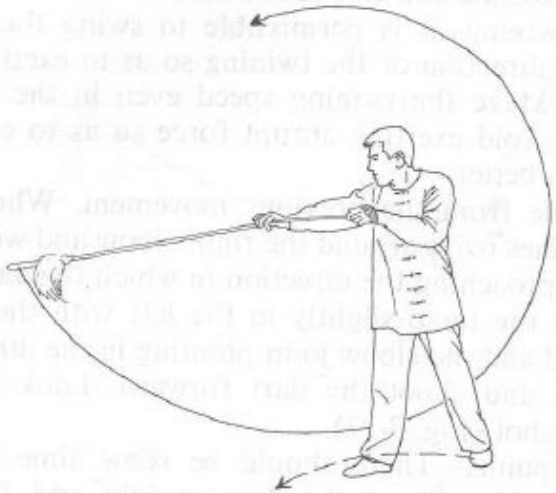


Fig. 7-27

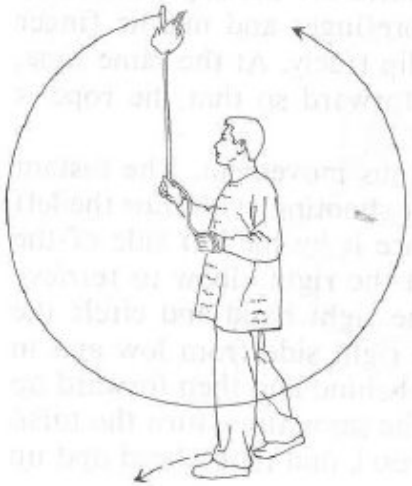


Fig. 7-28

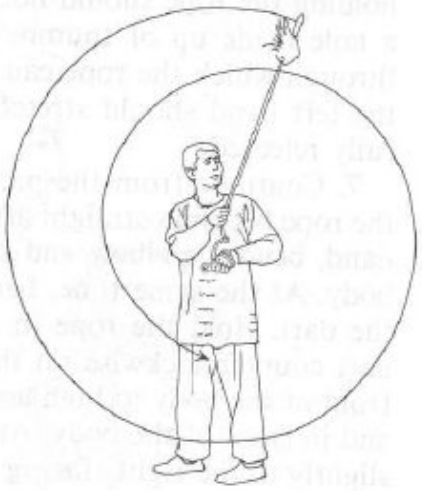


Fig. 7-29

back with the left hand and retrieve the dart with the right hand in a coordinated way so that the dart head does not touch the ground. The circling of the dart counterclockwise on the right side of the body should be executed as closely to the body as possible. In retrieving the dart, leave the exact part of the rope needed for the following technical movement.

8. Continue from the previous movement. While the right hand holding the rope circles the vertical circle counterclockwise on the right side of the body, and with the dart head moving to above and in front of the body, turn the torso slightly to the left. At the same time, hold the rope in the right hand and circle the dart from the right side to the left side of the body to form a counterclockwise vertical circle. Look up and to the left (Fig. 7-29).

Essential points: When the dart is circled from the right side to the left side of the body, the right hand should have the ability to make better use of the rope and gain move control over the rope so that the dart is moved in a vertical circle on the left side of the body and the rope is close to the body.

9. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart is circled counterclockwise on the left side of the body from low and in front of the body to high and behind the body to form a vertical circle, the dart head moves to high and in front of the body. At this point extend the left arm outward with the elbow level and place the left hand close in front of the left chest with the palm facing down and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing the chest. At the same time, hold the rope dart in the right hand and twine the dart counterclockwise, beginning at the lower part of the left elbow (Fig. 7-30).

Essential points: The extension of the left arm should

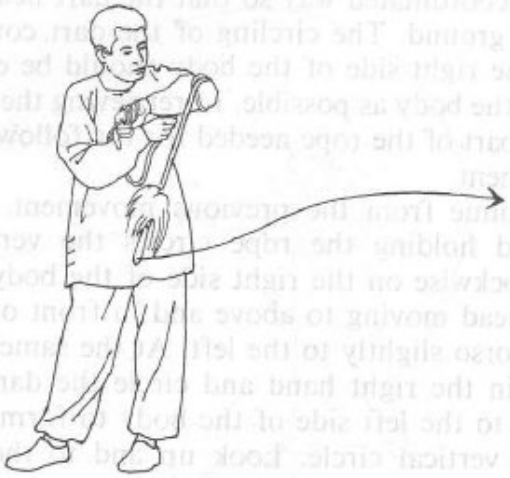


Fig. 7-30

be level and the forearm should be pressed to the upper arm as closely as possible so as to narrow the angle between them. The twining movements around the upper arm should be executed accurately making use of the momentum of the circling dart. In the course of twining, the left elbow can be swung in the direction of the twining in order to exert force on the rope dart.

10. Continue from the previous movement. After the rope has twined twice around the left elbow counterclockwise and the dart head has moved in the direction of the shot, turn the body 90 degrees to the left (facing south). The left elbow carries the dart to the left with the left body turn, the front part of the left elbow will face the direction of the shot and the dart shoots forward. Moreover, the right hand moves off the rope and the body weight is shifted to the left leg with the right heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground. Look in the direction of the shot

(Fig. 7-31).

Essential points: In shooting the dart, the turning of the body left, the swinging of the left elbow to the left with the shot and the right hand moving off the rope should be harmonious so that the rope is straight after the shot. Moreover, the timing for the shot should be gauged carefully. There should be some anticipation to ensure the smooth execution of the shooting movement.

11. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the rope of the dart is straight after shooting, hold the handle in the left hand and immediately retrieve the rope bending the elbow in front of the left abdomen. At the same time, stretch the right hand quickly to behind the left side of the body to grip the rope, raise the dart while its head is falling and circle it clockwise in a vertical circle on the left side of the body. Turn the torso to the right (facing east). Look up and to the left (Fig. 7-32).

Essential points: As the right hand moves off the rope and is on the left side of the body after shooting the dart, it will be more difficult for the right hand to grip the rope and retrieve the dart. Therefore, the practitioner is required to be ready to retrieve the dart the instant the dart is shot. The left hand drags the rope back and at the same time the right hand is stretched back to grip the rope behind the left side of the body with the palm facing the right and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing forward. Immediately turn the body 90 degrees to the right using the right hand to retrieve the dart and circle the dart clockwise from low behind the left side of the body to high and in front of the left side of the body. The whole technical movement is executed harmoniously. The dart head should not touch the ground during the retrieval.

12. Continue from the previous movement. While the

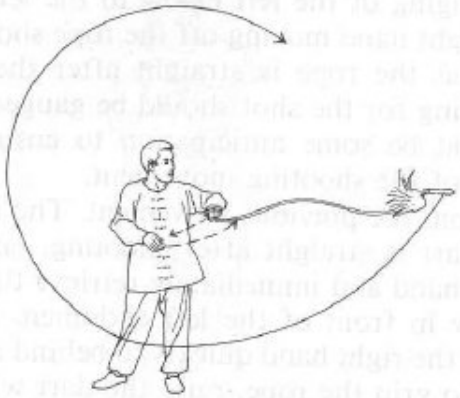


Fig. 7-31

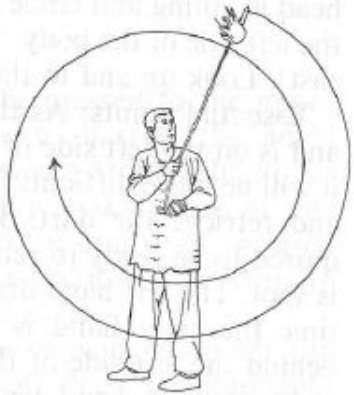


Fig. 7-32

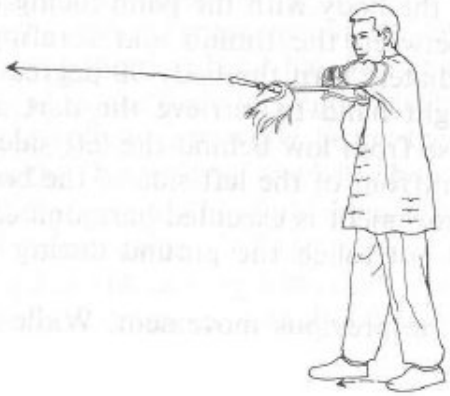


Fig. 7-33

dart is circled clockwise in a vertical circle on the left side of the body and the head moves to the upper left, entend the left arm outward horizontally and place the left hand in front of the left chest. Then hold the rope in the right hand and circle it clockwise from above the left elbow to below it. Look ahead to the left (Fig. 7-33).

Essential points: The twining movement should be precisely executed. When the left hand is placed before the left chest, press the forearm and the upper arm together as tightly as possible. When twining, make use of momentum in circling the dart in a vertical circle and sway the left elbow in the direction of the twining so as to exert force to the dart at the proper time. The right hand holding the rope should first be placed on the middle part of the forearm to ensure the accurate execution of the twining movement of the dart. The right hand should not move off the rope in the whole process of twining.

13. Continue from the previous movement. As the rope twines twice around the left elbow clockwise and the dart head moves in the direction of the shot, turn the torso slightly to the right side. The left elbow joint, moved by the left shoulder, is sent slightly in the direction of the shot with the joint of the left elbow facing that direction to shoot the dart forward. At the same time that the right hand releases the rope free, raise the left foot and move it forward. Look in the direction of the shot (Fig. 7-34).

Essential points: As the rope twines once around the left elbow, move the left elbow in a circle with the twining. Then immediately bring the left elbow in and send it slightly forward to shoot the dart forward. The whole exercise should be harmonious. The instant the dart head is straight after shooting, straighten the left arm and extend the left hand forward to lessen the tangential acceleration of the rope dart for connection to the follow-

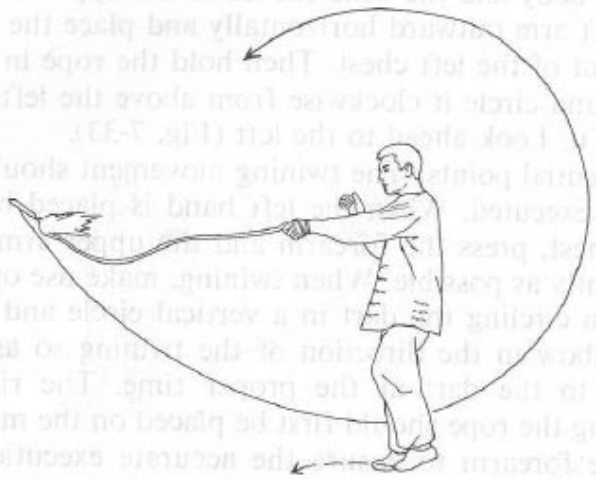


Fig. 7-34

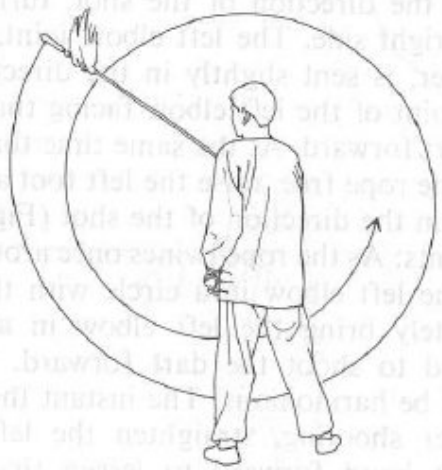


Fig. 7-35

ing movement.

14. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the dart is straight after shooting, bend the left hand to take back the dart. At the same time, stretch the right hand to grip the rope and raise it up and bend the elbow to circle the dart counterclockwise in a vertical circle on the right side of the body from up forward to the back and downward. At the same time, move the left foot forward and turn the body to the right (facing north). Look ahead (Fig. 7-35).

Essential points: When the right hand stretches forward to grip the rope, turn the palm to face the left side of the body with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing forward. After gripping the rope, first raise the right hand up because the head will fall down when the dart is straight after the shot. In order to prevent the dart head to touch the ground, keep the right hand at a sufficient height to keep the dart head from touching the ground when it falls and hangs perpendicular to the ground on the right side of the body. When the dart head moves past the right side of the body to behind the body, then move the right hand up to circle the dart. The whole exercise should be smoothly executed in a flowing style without any interruption.

15. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart has moved counterclockwise to above the left side of the body, bend the left arm forward and place the left hand in front of the right side of the chest with the right elbow joint facing the front of the body. At the same time, hold the rope in the right hand and twine it around the left elbow counterclockwise from high to low. When the rope comes from under the left elbow and the dart head moves to low on the the left side of the body, bend the right arm forward and place the right hand before the

chest so that the rope continues to twine around the right elbow counterclockwise from under the left elbow to above the right elbow. Look at the joint of the right elbow (Figs. 7-36A, B).

Essential points: When twining both elbows, the rope dart moves counterclockwise to first twine the left elbow and then the right elbow. The twining should make use of momentum in circling the dart to form a vertical circle. As the rope first twines around the left elbow, the radius of the rope dart becomes relatively shorter and the speed faster. At this time, raise the right elbow joint quickly to meet the rope, and sway the right elbow to lessen the moving speed of the dart ensuring smooth execution of the twining movement. The twining movement should be precisely executed and the two elbows closely coordinated. Accelerate the twining movement at the proper time to set up the execution of the following movement.

16. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart twines once around the right elbow and the dart head is about to face the direction of the shot, stamp both feet on the ground, jump and turn the airborne body 90 degrees to the right (facing east). Land with the feet apart, left foot ahead of right foot and bend the left leg to form the left bow step. At the same time, use the right elbow to shoot the dart forward with the right body turn. Look in the direction of the shot (Fig. 7-37).

Essential points: The dart should be shot the instant the feet are stamped on the ground and the body turns to the right. After landing, bend the left leg slightly, straighten the right leg and stamp the ground with the ball of the foot to keep the body weight stable. When shooting the dart the right hand should not move off the rope, the right arm should be fully extended and the left hand should also be sent forward in the direction of the shot together with the

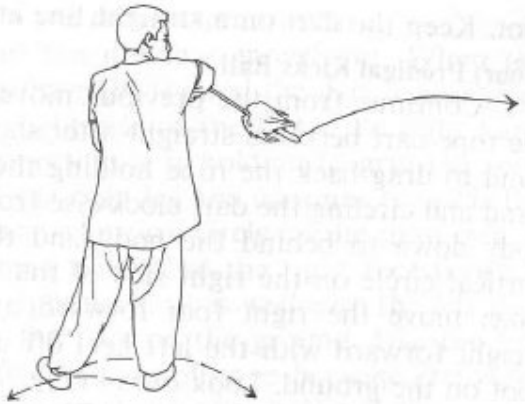


Fig. 7-36A

Fig. 7-36B

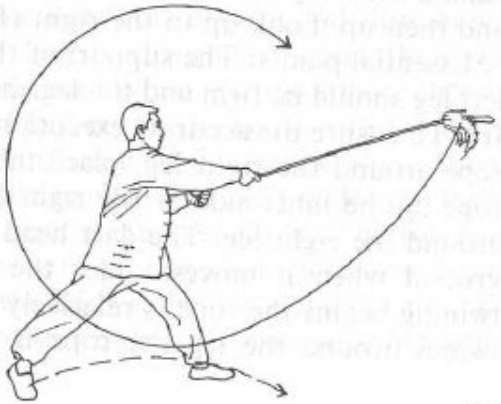


Fig. 7-37

shot. Keep the dart on a straight line after shooting.

(Four) Prodigal Kicks Ball

1. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the rope dart becomes straight after shooting, use the left hand to drag back the rope holding the rope in the right hand and circling the dart clockwise from the front of the body down to behind the body and then up to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, move the right foot forward and shift the body weight forward with the left heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground. Look ahead (Fig. 7-38).

Essential points: Force should be exerted evenly when the rope is dragged back by the left hand to avoid a sudden pull on the dart head resulting from abrupt force. The retrieval of the dart by the right hand should be quick and the head should not touch the ground.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart has circled clockwise to above and in front of the body, move the left foot forward and bend the left leg slightly to support the body weight. At the same time, bend the right leg slightly and raise it up on the right side of the body. Hold the rope in the right hand and twine it clockwise from above and in front of the body down to behind the body out from under the inner side of the thigh and then up. Look up to the right (Fig. 7-39).

Essential points: The support of the body weight by the left leg should be firm and the leg should not swing to and fro. To ensure the accurate execution of the twining of the rope around the right leg, place the right hand with the rope by the inner side of the right leg as the rope twines around the right leg. The dart head should not touch the ground when it moves under the right leg. When the twining begins the rope is relatively short, but as the rope twines around the leg the rope is lengthened to ensure

smooth execution of the following movement.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope twines around the right leg and the dart head moves high to behind the right side of the body, the right hand moves off the rope section it is holding to grip the rope coming from under the right leg and continue to circle the dart clockwise to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, land the right foot forward shifting the body weight forward as well with the left heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground. Use the left forefinger to hold the section of rope between the right hand and the right leg up. Look ahead (Fig. 7-40).

Essential points: This movement is to twine the rope dart once around the right leg which calls for accurate execution and close coordination between the hands and the feet. When twining, the right hand with the rope should make a small circle circling the dart clockwise to form a vertical circle. When the right leg is raised, the right hand is just drawing a small circle above the right leg and then moves forward and down to form a circle. In this way, the right hand moves precisely to the inner side of the right leg when the rope twines around the right leg. This is the skill used in twining the rope dart.

4. Continue from the previous movement. In circling the rope dart, move the left foot forward and then move the right foot forward and stand with feet apart, the right foot ahead of the left foot. When the dart head moves clockwise to above and in front of the body, turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing west). At the same time, hold the rope in the right hand and press it under the right armpit with the bend between the thumb and the forefinger facing up and move the rope dart clockwise from above and in front of the body to behind the body and up. Use the right armpit to move the rope dart together with

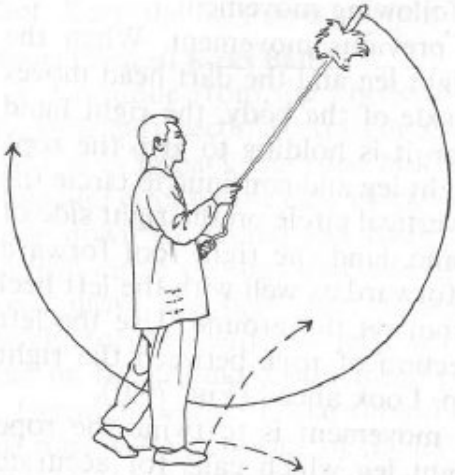


Fig. 7-38

Fig. 7-39

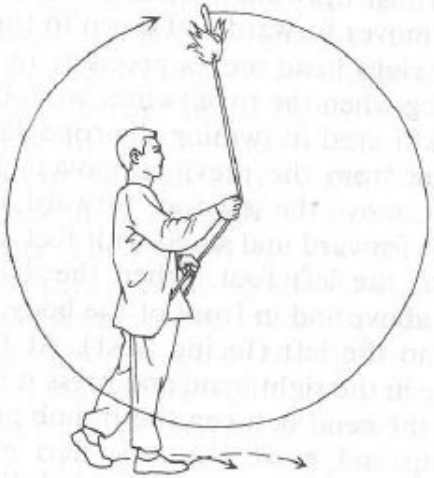


Fig. 7-40

the left body turn so that the dart is close to the right side of the body. Look ahead (Fig. 7-41).

Essential points: When circling the dart clockwise, move the foot forward naturally and harmoniously. There should be good coordination between pressing the rope under the armpit and turning the body to the left. When turning the body, use the right armpit to move the rope dart smoothly.

5. Continue from the previous movement. When the body is turned 180 degrees (facing west), hold the rope in the right hand and circle the dart clockwise from above and behind the body to the front of the body to form a vertical circle with the left hand remaining to hold the rope in front of the abdomen. Look ahead (Fig. 7-42).

Essential points: The right hand circles the rope dart clockwise to form a vertical circle with the direction of circling remaining unchanged. However, as the location of the body has changed which leads to a different direction

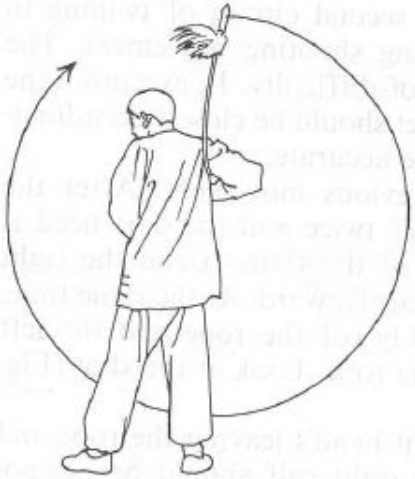


Fig. 7-41

Fig. 7-42

of circling. For example, before the body turn the circling is from back to front. But after the body turn the circling is from front to back. Beginners should have a clear understanding of this.

6. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart circles clockwise from below to above in the front, bend the left leg slightly to support the body weight, bend the right leg and raise it. At the same time, hold the rope in the right hand and twine the rope twice from the outer side of the knee joint of the right leg to the inner side of the calf and obliquely downward to the right ankle. Look at the right ankle (Fig. 7-43).

Essential points: When the rope twines from the right knee to the calf and the ankle, the right hand does not move off the rope. The right hand should be close to the outer side of the right knee. When twining the right calf should be first flexed and then extended. Generally speaking, the knee should be slightly bent in the first circuit of twining in order to apply force on the rope dart. The knee should be extended for the second circuit of twining in order to set up the following shooting movement. The movement has some degree of difficulty. In executing the movement, the hands and feet should be closely coordinated and the twining should be accurate.

7. Continue from the previous movement. After the rope dart has twined the calf twice and the dart head is about to face the direction of the shot, extend the right calf forward and shoot the dart forward. At the same time, the right hand moves quickly off the rope and the left forefinger also moves off the rope. Look at the shot (Fig. 7-44).

Essential points: The right hand's leaving the rope and shooting the dart with the right calf should be harmonious. In shooting the dart, the calf is sent forward while

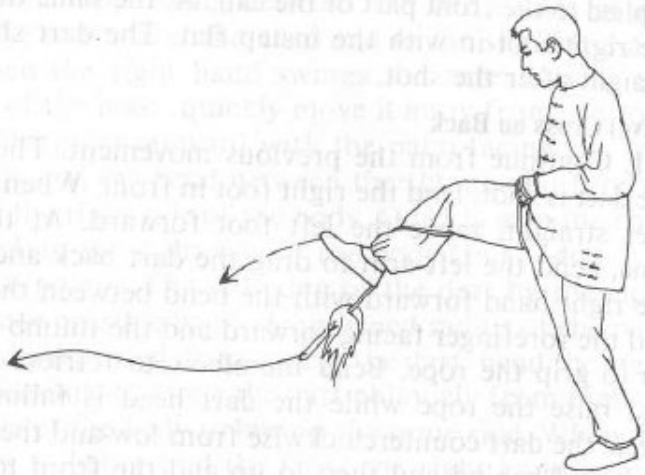


Fig. 7-43

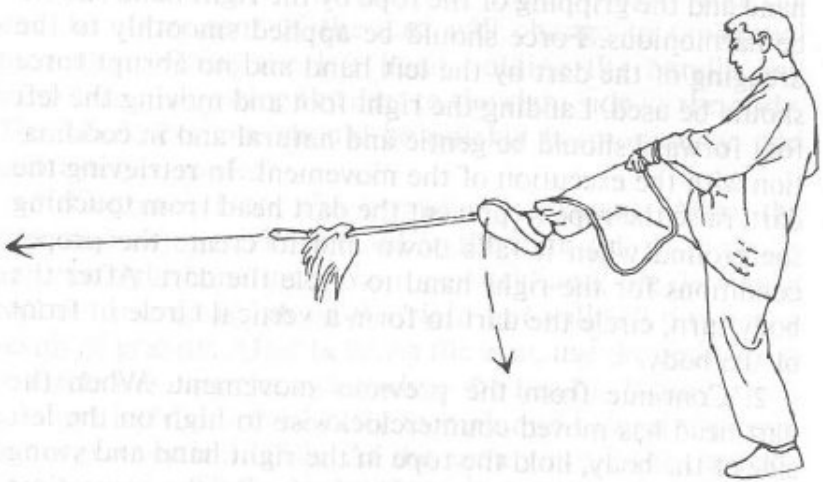


Fig. 7-44

the rope twines through the second circuit with the force applied to the front part of the calf. At the same time, turn the right foot in with the instep flat. The dart should be straight after the shot.

(Five) Cross on Back

1. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the dart is shot, land the right foot in front. When the dart flies straight, move the left foot forward. At the same time, bend the left arm to drag the dart back and stretch the right hand forward with the bend between the thumb and the forefinger facing forward and the thumb pointing up to grip the rope. Bend the elbow to retrieve the dart and raise the rope while the dart head is falling. Then circle the dart counterclockwise from low and the front to high and behind and then to up and the front to form a vertical circle. At the same time, turn the torso about 90 degrees to the right (facing north) and stand with the feet apart. Look to the left (Fig. 7-45).

Essential points: The dragging of the dart by the left hand and the gripping of the rope by the right hand should be harmonious. Force should be applied smoothly to the dragging of the dart by the left hand and no abrupt force should be used. Landing the right foot and moving the left foot forward should be gentle and natural and in coodination with the execution of the movement. In retrieving the dart, raise the rope to prevent the dart head from touching the ground when it falls down and to create the proper conditions for the right hand to circle the dart. After the body turn, circle the dart to form a vertical circle in front of the body.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart head has moved counterclockwise to high on the left side of the body, hold the rope in the right hand and swing the dart to the right side of the body. At the same time

hold the handle in the left hand, bend the arm and raise it and move the rope lying between the two hands in the front of the chest, over the head and to the shoulders and back. When the right hand swings the rope dart to the right side of the body, quickly move it away from the rope and turn the palm outward with the palm facing the rear of the body and the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing the right side of the body. Quickly grip the rope again. Look to the right side of the body (Fig. 7-46).

Essential points: The swinging of the dart by the right hand is made possible by the lengthened radius of the rope and the reduced speed. In swinging the dart, bend the right arm and continue to circle the dart obliquely from high on the left side of the body to low on the same side. When the dart moves to below and the front the right hand swings the dart to the right side of the body. At the same time extend the right arm horizontally to the right side of the body, move the right hand away from the rope and quickly turn the palm over to grip the rope. At this time, the weight of the dart will pull the rope straight and the circular movement of the dart will change to tangential movement. Raise the left hand holding the handle and simultaneously swing the dart to the right side of the body. The whole exercise should be quickly harmoniously, and accurately executed.

3. Continue from the previous movement. After the rope dart swings to horizontal on the right side of the body and the right hand grips the rope backhand, the dart head will not move to high on the right but will fall down as a result of gravity. After bending the arm, use the right hand to circle the dart clockwise while the head is falling, from low and in front of the body to high and behind the body to form a vertical circle. At the same time, hold the rope handle in the left hand, bend the arm and withdraw it to

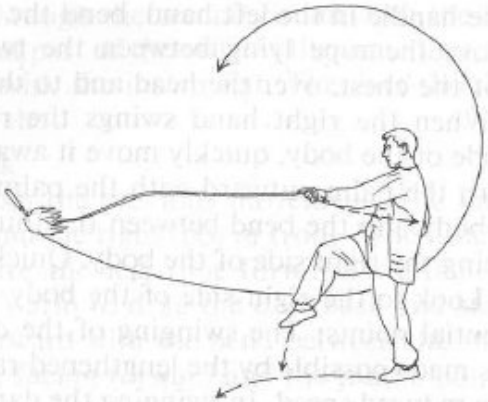


Fig. 7-45

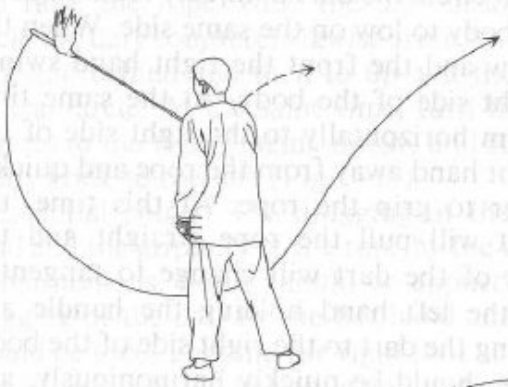


Fig. 7-46

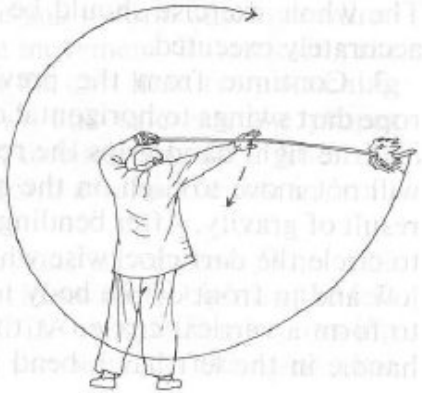


Fig. 7-47

the front of the left abdomen. Turn the body 90 degrees to the right (facing east) and shift the body weight forward to the front leg (right leg) with the left heel off and the toe on the ground. Look ahead (Fig. 7-47).

Essential points: After this movement is executed, the rope twines from the right shoulder obliquely downward and across the back to under the right armpit. Use the left forefinger to hold the rope section between the right hand and the body.

4. Continue from the previous movement. Hold the rope in the right hand and continue to circle the dart clockwise to form a vertical circle. When the dart head moves to high and in front of the body, turn the body 90 degrees to the left (facing north) and shift the body weight to the left foot with the right heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground. At the same time, raise the right hand and shoot the dart from the right side of the body, behind the waist and to the left side. The right hand immediately moves away from the rope. Look to the left at the shot (Figs. 7-48A, B).

Essential points: When the right hand shoots the dart to the left side, first raise the right hand and then move it to the right side of the body and then send the right hand back quickly to the left side of the body to shoot the dart to the left past the rear waist. The left body turn, the raising of the right hand with the rope dart and the shooting should be executed harmoniously. When shooting the dart, the wrist should be snapped abruptly to ensure that the dart goes straight after shooting. When the body is turned to the left, the right hand should be placed at the right side of the body and slightly towards the rear to ensure the dart being shot accurately. At this time, the left finger should not move away from the held rope.

and raise it up to receive the rope dart arriving above the right shoulder. Look up to the right (Fig. 7-51).

Essential points: The twining of the rope dart from under the left armpit to above the right shoulder should

Fig. 7-49A

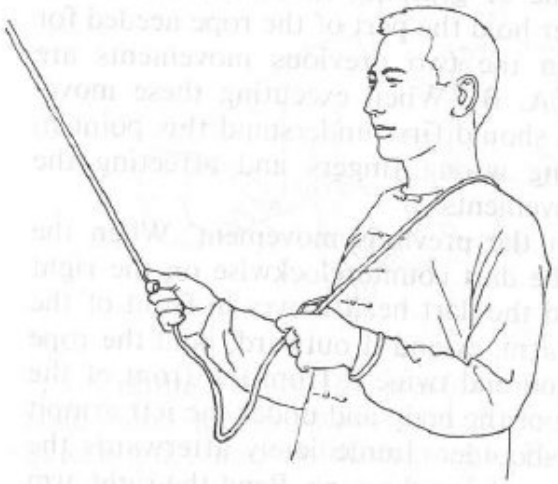


Fig. 7-49B

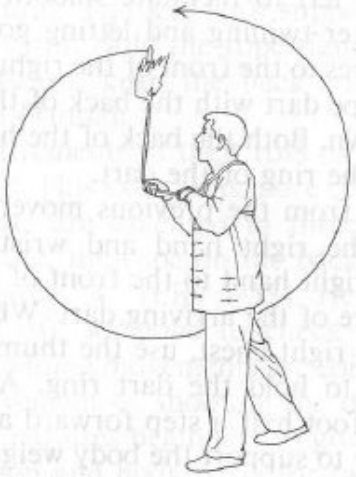


Fig. 7-50A

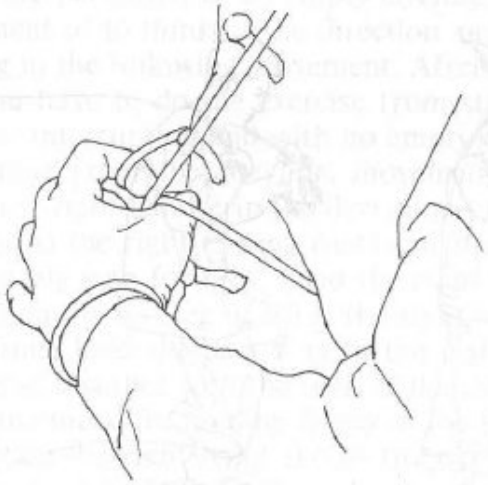


Fig. 7-50B

be precisely executed. In twining, the head should be inclined to the left to facilitate smooth execution of the movement. After twining and letting go of the rope, the right hand moves to the front of the right shoulder to meet the arriving rope dart with the back of the hand and wrist and slow it down. Both the back of the hand and the wrist should touch the ring of the dart.

7. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the back of the right hand and wrist touch the dart, withdraw the right hand to the front of the right chest to buffer the force of the arriving dart. When the dart stops in front of the right chest, use the thumb, forefinger and middle finger to hold the dart ring. At the same time, move the left foot half a step forward and then bend the left leg slightly to support the body weight. Bend the right leg and place the right foot against the rear side of the left calf with the body leaning slightly forward. Look at the right hand (Fig. 7-52).

Fig. 7-51

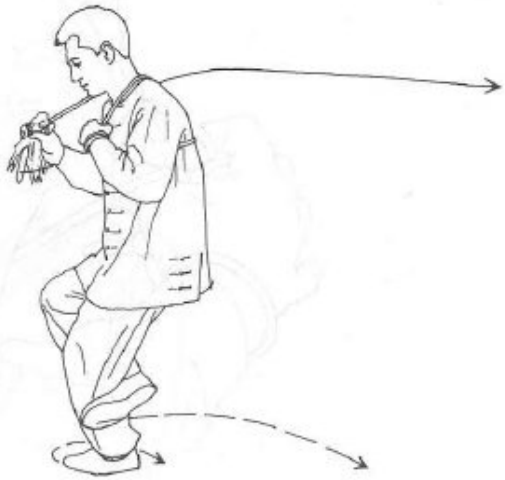


Fig. 7-52

Essential points: The whole movement should be harmonious and natural. The left leg's support of the body weight should be firm. Hold the rope tightly. When leaning the torso forward, keep the back straight with the energy flowing to Dantian.

The twining movements in the Cross on Back are completed by this stage. This exercise is more complicated. The twining movements are executed in three stages. When they come to a close, the rope on the back is shaped like a cross or the letter "X" (Fig. 7-53). Hence the name. Beginners should ask someone to check if the back is crossed after the twining movements are completed. If not, the following movement of shooting the dart should not be executed. This requires beginners to give special attention to the direction and body parts for twining in every movement as well as every twining movement and especially the fingers holding the rope for the left hand. Beginners are permitted to do empty circling in the twining movement or to think of the direction and body parts for twining in the following movement. After you become skillful, you have to do the exercise from start to finish without any interruption and with no empty circling.

8. Continue from the previous movement. After the fingers of the right hand grip the dart ring, turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing east) and then move the right foot a big step forward, bend the right leg forward and straighten the left leg to form the right bow step. At the same time, hold the dart ring in the right hand and snap the wrist together with the turn of the torso to shoot the dart. First move the holding finger of the left hand off the rope while the right hand shoots the dart, then raise the left hand with the rope dart overhead and send it forward. After shooting the dart, the right hand immediately stretches forward to grip the rope. Look in the

direction the dart goes (Fig. 7-54).

Essential points: When shooting the dart, hold the dart ring in the right hand and turn the body to the right to send the hand forward in the direction the dart goes and

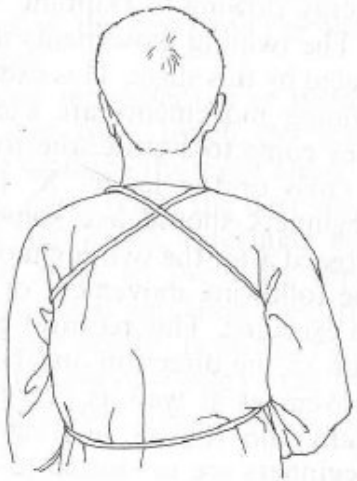


Fig. 7-53

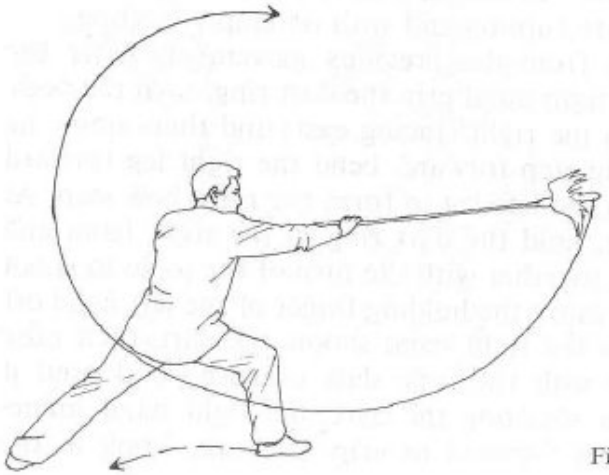


Fig. 7-54

when the arm is almost fully extended, snap the wrist to apply power to help shoot the dart. Move the finger of the left hand off the rope it holds while the right hand shoots the dart and immediately raise the left hand up to move the rope on the left shoulder from behind the neck and across the head to the front of the chest. Send the left hand forward while the right hand shoots the dart to increase the distance of the shot. After snapping the wrist and shooting the dart, immediately extend the hand forward to grip the rope. Pivot on the left heel when turning the body to the right. After the body is turned, straighten the left leg. In doing the whole exercise, all movements of turning the body, snapping the wrist, shooting the dart, raising the left hand overhead, bending the right leg forward and straightening the left leg should be harmoniously executed.

(Six) Yaksha Searches Sea

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart has shot straight after release, use the right hand to grip the rope and bend the elbow to retrieve the rope dart. Bend the left elbow and place the hand at the left side of the body. When the right hand withdraws the rope dart, raise the hand while the dart head is falling and circle it clockwise to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, withdraw the right foot half a step after stamping it on the ground and shift the body weight to the right leg with the left heel off the ground and follow with a step forward. Look ahead (Fig. 7-55).

Essential points: The retrieval of the dart should be quick and there should be cooperation between withdrawal of the right foot and retrieval of the dart. In the process of retrieving the dart do your best to prevent the dart from touching the ground.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the

rope dart is circled clockwise and the dart head moves to high and in front of the body, move the left foot forward to be parallel with the right foot with the feet one shoulder's width apart. At the same time, use the right hand to circle the rope dart so that the dart head shoots forward from high and in front of the body down and through the two legs to behind the body. Bend the torso slightly to the right. Look in the direction the dart goes (Fig. 7-56).

Essential points: When the right hand shoots the dart through the legs to behind the body and the head of the dart comes to a place in front the body and between the legs, the right hand should raise the rope dart so that it moves flat and straight after shooting or it is possible for the dart to hit the ground. Special attention should be paid when the dart is shot: the raising of the rope upward should be well timed so that it is not raised too high where it might hit the crotch. At the same time, the shooting should be accurately executed and the dart should not touch either leg. When shooting the dart, the right hand should leave the rope free at the proper time.

3. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the rope becomes straight after shooting, turn the body quickly to the right 180 degrees (facing west) and stretch the right hand quickly forward to grip the rope and circle the dart counterclockwise on the right side of the body to form a vertical circle. At the same time, move the right foot forward while turning the body to the right and stand with the feet apart, right foot ahead of the left foot. After the body is turned, use the thumb of the left hand to hold the section of rope between the right hand and the right thigh on the abdomen. Look ahead (Fig. 7-57).

Essential points: When the above movement is finished, the body should tend to turn to the right. Because the location for shooting the dart is relatively low, the left

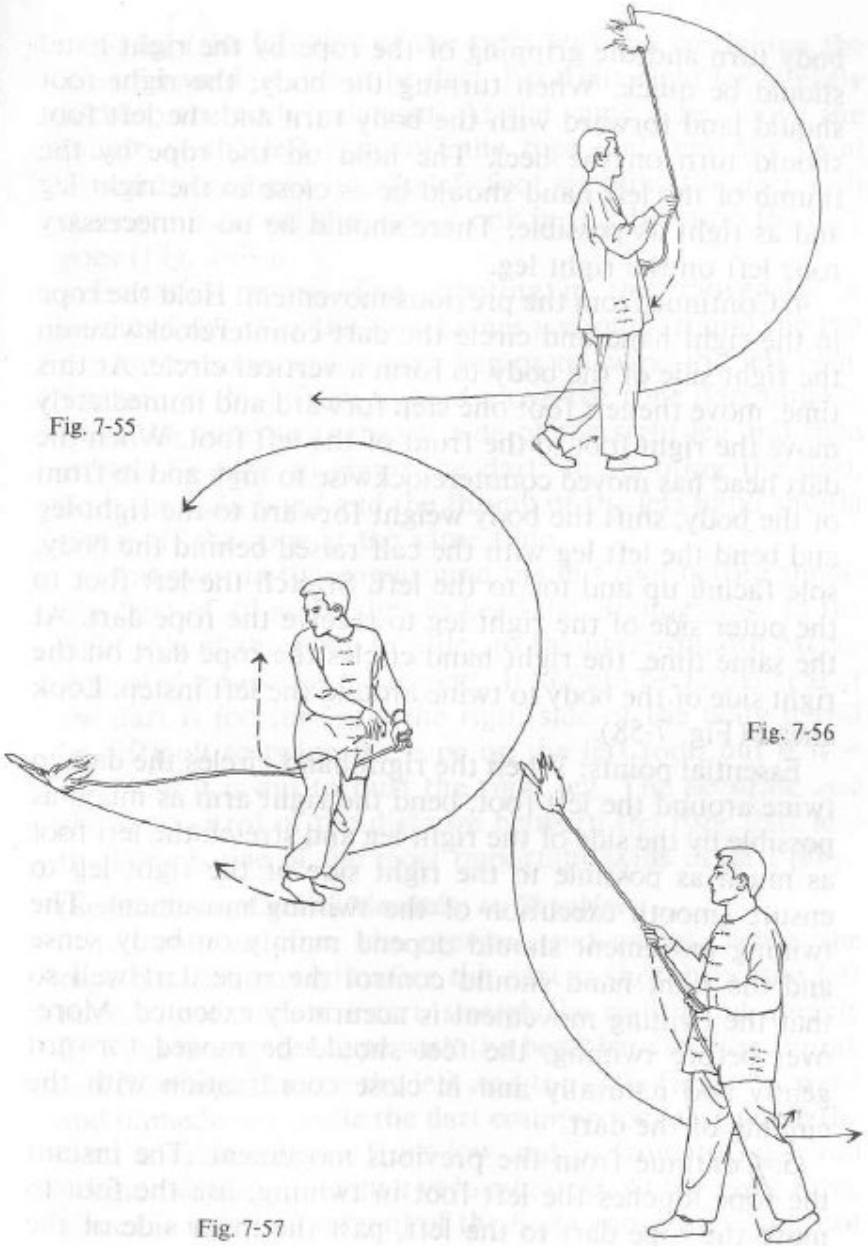


Fig. 7-55

Fig. 7-56

Fig. 7-57

body turn and the gripping of the rope by the right hand should be quick. When turning the body, the right foot should land forward with the body turn and the left foot should turn on the heel. The hold on the rope by the thumb of the left hand should be as close to the right leg and as tight as possible. There should be no unnecessary rope left on the right leg.

4. Continue from the previous movement. Hold the rope in the right hand and circle the dart counterclockwise on the right side of the body to form a vertical circle. At this time, move the left foot one step forward and immediately move the right foot to the front of the left foot. When the dart head has moved counterclockwise to high and in front of the body, shift the body weight forward to the right leg and bend the left leg with the calf raised behind the body, sole facing up and toe to the left. Stretch the left foot to the outer side of the right leg to receive the rope dart. At the same time, the right hand circles the rope dart on the right side of the body to twine around the left instep. Look ahead (Fig. 7-58).

Essential points: When the right hand circles the dart to twine around the left foot, bend the right arm as much as possible by the side of the right leg and stretch the left foot as much as possible to the right side of the right leg to ensure smooth execution of the twining movement. The twining movement should depend mainly on body sense and the right hand should control the rope dart well so that the twining movement is accurately executed. Moreover before twining, the feet should be moved forward gently and naturally and in close coordination with the circling of the dart.

5. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the rope touches the left foot in twining, use the foot to move the rope dart to the left, past the inner side of the

right leg (the left side of the right leg) and straighten the knee forward to shoot the dart. Bend the right leg slightly to keep the body balanced. At the same time, move the thumb of the left hand off the rope and send the hand forward together with the left foot shooting the dart with the right hand off the rope. Look in the direction the dart goes (Fig. 7-59).

Essential points: The shooting in this movement is executed not after the rope twines a circuit around the left toe but as soon as the rope begins to twine the left foot. Therefore, the left leg should move the rope dart quickly from the outer to the inner side of the right leg and then stretch forward to shoot the dart. In shooting the dart, both the right hand and the thumb of the left hand should move off the rope at the same time.

Moreover, in twining around the left foot before shooting, first of all make sure to keep the circling close to the right side of the body in order to facilitate smooth execution of the twining movement. It should be noted that if the dart is too far from the right side of the body it will be difficult to twine the rope on the left foot, but if it is too close it is apt to hurt the right leg. The accurate and skillful control of the distance between the rope dart and the body is one of the most important skills in dart play.

(Seven) Erlang Carries Mountain on Shoulder

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope becomes straight after the dart is shot, bend the left hand to pull back the dart, stretch the right hand quickly forward to grip the rope with the bend between the thumb and forefinger facing the left and the little finger forward and immediately circle the dart counterclockwise while the head is falling down, from low and in front to high and behind the body to form a vertical circle. At the same time, place the left foot in front of the body, move the right foot

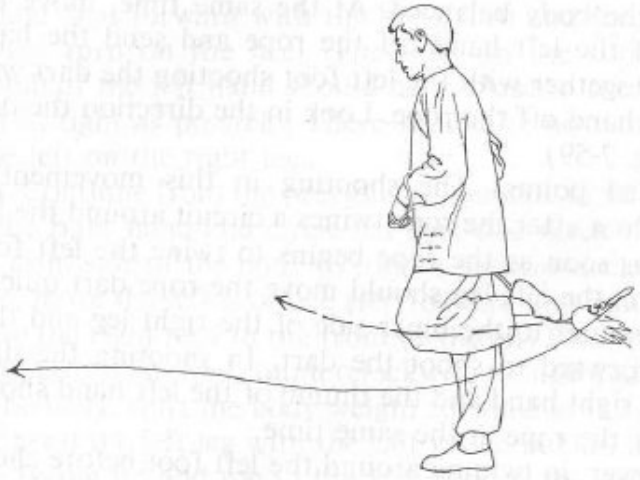


Fig. 7-58

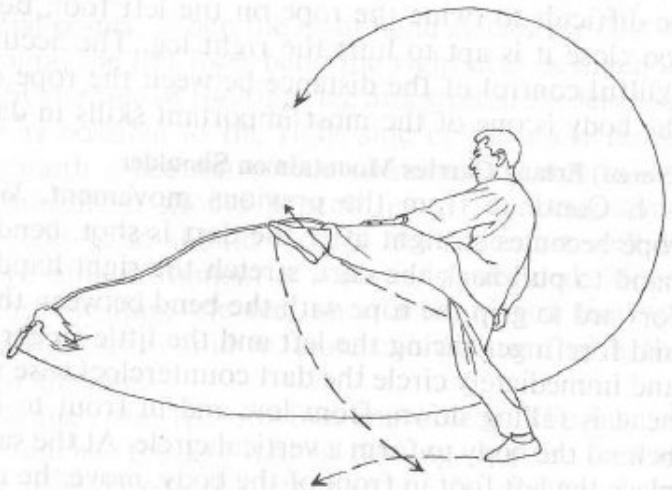


Fig. 7-59

Fig. 7-60

ahead of the left foot and stand with the feet apart, right foot ahead of the left foot. Look up and ahead (Fig. 7-60).

Essential points: The pulling back of the dart by the left hand, the stretching of the right hand forward to grip the rope and the landing of the left foot in front of the body should be executed simultaneously in a coordinated way. When the right hand grips the rope, the dart head should be on the side of the little finger of the left hand. The right foot should be moved forward with the circling of the dart to form a vertical circle.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart moves counterclockwise to high and in front of the body, move the left foot one step forward and at the same time turn the body 90 degrees to the right (facing north). Look above the left side of the body (Fig. 7-61).

Essential points: After the body is turned, stand with the feet apart, hold the rope in the right hand and circle

it counterclockwise in front of the body with the left hand at the left side of the body.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart moves counterclockwise in front of the body to form a vertical circle and the dart head moves to high on the left side of the body, turn the torso slightly to the right, hold the rope in the right hand, bend the arm and raise it up. Stretch the right arm to the right side after the dart is circled to below and in front to swing the dart outward to the right side of the body. Look in the direction the dart swings (Fig. 7-62).

Essential points: When the right arm is bent to move the dart head precisely to low in front of the body, keep the arm straight to slow the speed of the dart and increase the radius of the dart's movement. This will allow the dart to swing to the right side and control the swing of the dart on the horizontal level. Therefore, before the dart is swung outward the speed of the dart movement should be slowed. This calls for the intentional control of the speed of dart circling to ensure smooth execution of the dart swinging. The bending and raising of the right arm acts to slow the circling speed. Beginners are advised to practise to understand the point.

4. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the rope dart swings to horizontal on the right side of the body, use the right hand to quickly retrieve the dart and raise the rope in front of the right chest and extend the right arm out horizontally to swing the dart from the right side of the body to behind the body and to the left side of the body. When the rope touches the right armpit, move the right hand off the rope at the proper instant. At the same time, bend the left arm and raise it to the left shoulder with the elbow facing down, ready to carry the rope from low to high. At the same time, shift the body

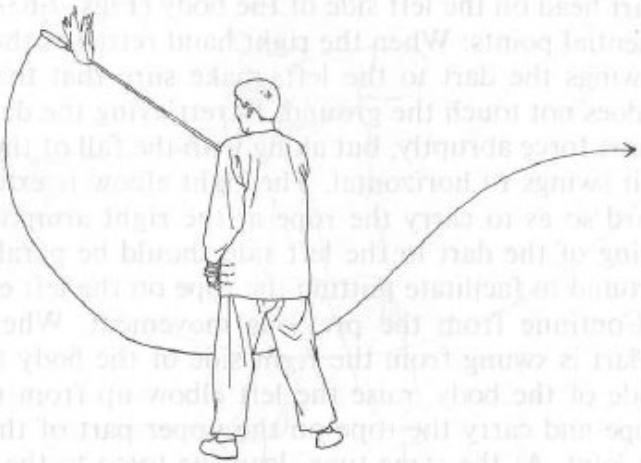


Fig. 7-61

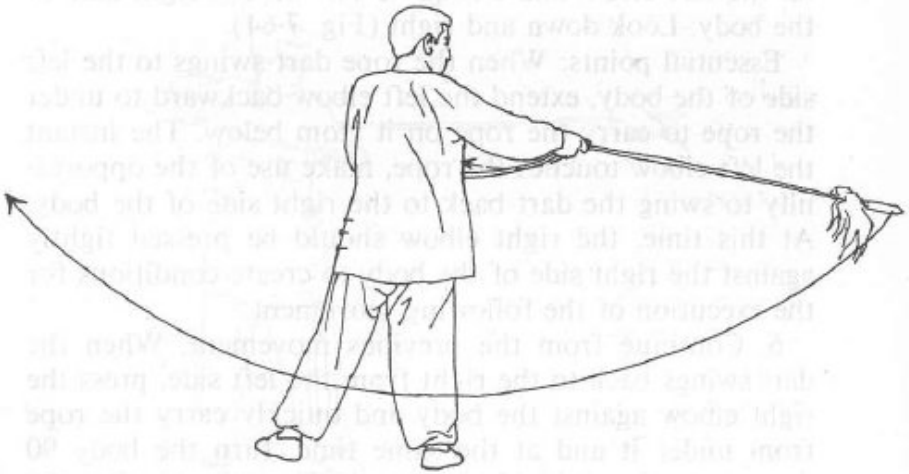


Fig. 7-62

weight to the left leg with the right heel off and the toe on the ground and lean the body to the left side. Look at the dart head on the left side of the body (Figs. 7-63A, B).

Essential points: When the right hand retrieves the dart and swings the dart to the left, make sure that the dart head does not touch the ground. In retrieving the dart, do not exert force abruptly, but along with the fall of the dart after it swings to horizontal. The right elbow is extended outward so as to carry the rope at the right armpit. The swinging of the dart to the left side should be parallel to the ground to facilitate putting the rope on the left elbow.

5. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart is swung from the right side of the body to the left side of the body, raise the left elbow up from under the rope and carry the rope on the upper part of the left elbow joint. At the same time, lean the torso to the right and raise the left foot slightly so that the dart returns as a result of the gravity of the dart head after it is carried on the left elbow and swings to low on the right side of the body. Look down and right (Fig. 7-64).

Essential points: When the rope dart swings to the left side of the body, extend the left elbow backward to under the rope to carry the rope on it from below. The instant the left elbow touches the rope, make use of the opportunity to swing the dart back to the right side of the body. At this time, the right elbow should be pressed tightly against the right side of the body to create conditions for the execution of the following movement.

6. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart swings back to the right from the left side, press the right elbow against the body and quickly carry the rope from under it and at the same time, turn the body 90 degrees to the right (facing east). The instant after the right elbow carries the rope, raise the right elbow up and

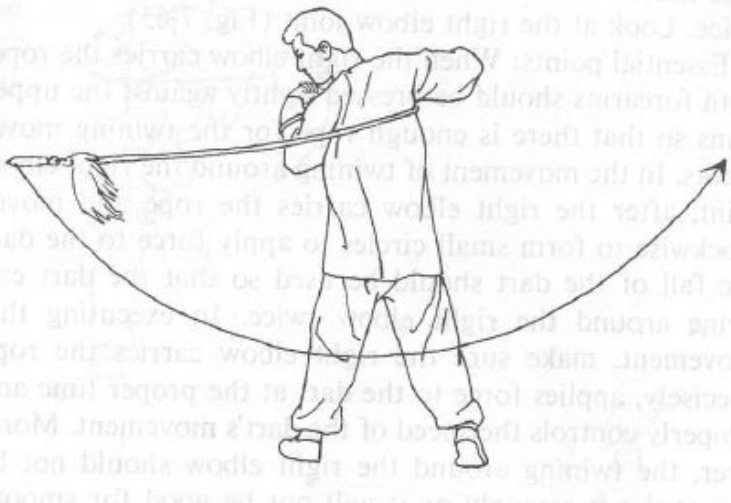


Fig. 7-63A

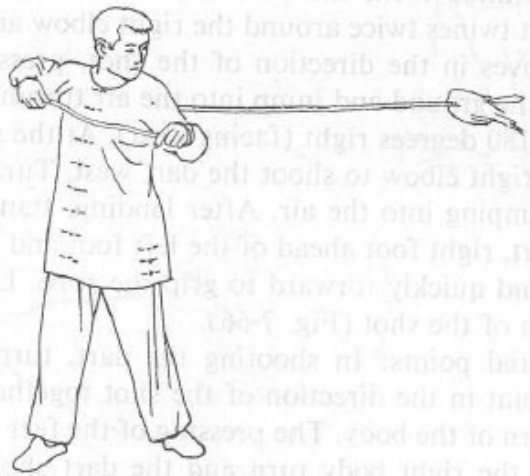


Fig. 7-63B

move the elbow clockwise in small circles so that the rope dart moves clockwise and twines around the right elbow twice. Look at the right elbow joint (Fig. 7-65).

Essential points: When the right elbow carries the rope, both forearms should be pressed tightly against the upper arms so that there is enough rope for the twining movements. In the movement of twining around the right elbow joint, after the right elbow carries the rope and moves clockwise to form small circles to apply force to the dart the fall of the dart should be used so that the dart can twine around the right elbow twice. In executing this movement, make sure the right elbow carries the rope precisely, applies force to the dart at the proper time and properly controls the speed of the dart's movement. Moreover, the twining around the right elbow should not be executed too strongly or it will not be good for smooth execution of the dart shot.

7. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart twines twice around the right elbow and the dart head moves in the direction of the shot, press both feet against the ground and jump into the air turning the body quickly 180 degrees right (facing west). At the same time, use the right elbow to shoot the dart west. Turn the body while jumping into the air. After landing, stand with the feet apart, right foot ahead of the left foot and stretch the right hand quickly forward to grip the rope. Look in the direction of the shot (Fig. 7-66).

Essential points: In shooting the dart, turn the right elbow joint in the direction of the shot together with the jump turn of the body. The pressing of the feet against the ground, the right body turn and the dart shot from the right elbow should be closely connected.

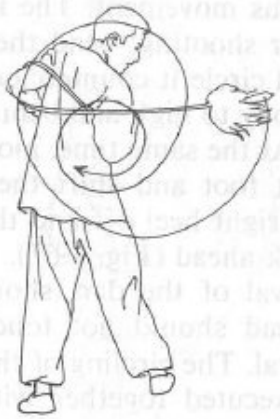


Fig. 7-64

Fig. 7-65

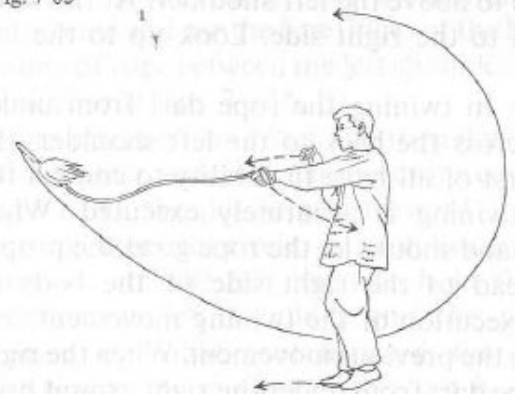


Fig. 7-66

(Eight) Hundred Birds Greet Phoenix

1. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the rope becomes straight after shooting, bend the right elbow to pull back the dart and circle it counterclockwise from low and in front of the body to high and behind the body to form a vertical circle. At the same time, move the left foot in front of the right foot and shift the body weight to the left leg with the right heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground. Look ahead (Fig. 7-67).

Essential points: The retrieval of the dart should be clean and quick. The dart head should not touch the ground in the process of retrieval. The circling of the dart counterclockwise should be executed together with the retrieval. Move the left foot forward simultaneously with the circling. This should seem light and natural.

2. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope dart moves counterclockwise to high and in front of the body, move the right foot half a step forward and shift the body weight to both legs. At the same time, hold the rope dart in the right hand under the right armpit with the bend between the thumb and the forefinger facing in and the palm facing back to twine the rope around from under the right armpit up to above the left shoulder. At the same time lean the head to the right side. Look up to the left (Fig. 7-68).

Essential points: In twining the rope dart from under the right armpit across the back to the left shoulder, the right hand must first of all have the ability to control the dart so that the twining is accurately executed. When twining, the right hand should let the rope go at the proper time. Slant the head to the right side of the body to facilitate smooth execution of the twining movement.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the right hand twines the rope dart from under the right armpit back

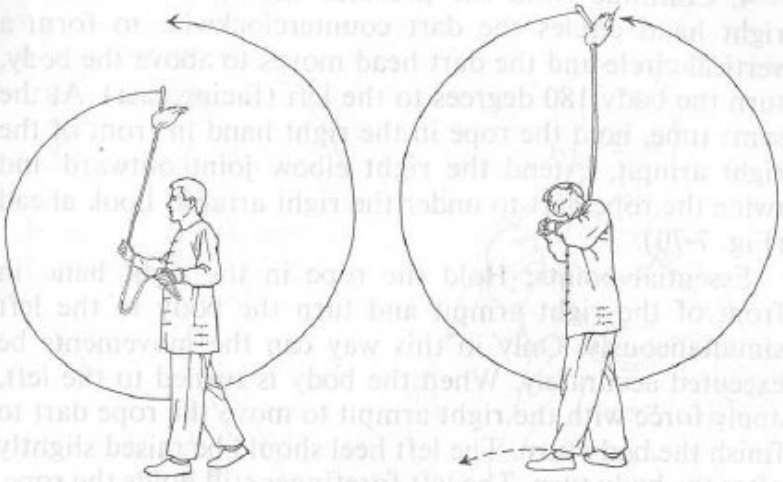


Fig. 7-67 Fig. 7-68

to the left shoulder, it immediately moves off the rope, stretches up to receive the dart arriving above the left shoulder and circles it counterclockwise to form a vertical circle on the right side of the body. At the same time, move the right foot forward and shift the body weight forward to the right leg with the left heel off and the ball of the foot on the ground and use the forefinger of the left hand to hold the section of rope between the left shoulder and the right hand. Look ahead (Figs. 7-69A, B).

Essential points: When the rope dart twines around the left shoulder and continues to move counterclockwise, the right hand should stretch forward to quickly grip the arriving rope to circle it in a vertical circle. Use the forefinger of the left hand to hold the section of rope between the left shoulder and the right hand tightly. Moving the right foot forward should be coordinated closely with the circling of the dart by the right hand.

4. Continue from the previous movement. When the right hand circles the dart counterclockwise to form a vertical circle and the dart head moves to above the body, turn the body 180 degrees to the left (facing east). At the same time, hold the rope in the right hand in front of the right armpit, extend the right elbow joint outward and twine the rope dart to under the right armpit. Look ahead (Fig. 7-70).

Essential points: Hold the rope in the right hand in front of the right armpit and turn the body to the left simultaneously. Only in this way can the movements be executed accurately. When the body is turned to the left, apply force with the right armpit to move the rope dart to finish the body turn. The left heel should be raised slightly after the body turn. The left forefinger still holds the rope.

5. Continue from the previous movement. After the body turns 180 degrees to the left, use the right armpit to move the dart counterclockwise from above and behind the right side of the body to above and in front to form a vertical circle. Keep the feet in the same position. Look ahead (Fig. 7-71).

Essential points: After the body turn, the right armpit moves the rope dart counterclockwise in a vertical circle. When the dart moves obliquely to below and in front, bend the right arm to circle the dart in a vertical circle. Pay close attention to timing.

6. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart moves counterclockwise to high and in front, bend the right arm and extend it out to horizontal, the right hand twining the dart counterclockwise from high and outside the right arm to the inside of the right arm one time. At the same time turn the body 180 degrees to the right (facing west) and shift the body weight to the right leg with the left heel off the ground. Look at the right elbow

Fig. 7-69A

Fig. 7-69B

Fig. 7-70

Fig. 7-71

joint (Figs. 7-72A, B).

Essential points: The instant the dart twines to the outer side of the right arm, immediately turn the body 180 degrees to the right and use the outer side of the right arm to move the dart to the right. The twining should be precisely executed. Pivot on the balls of both feet to turn the body.

7. Continue from the previous movement. While the right arm together with the turn of the body moves the rope dart to the right side of the body and the dart moves away from the right arm in the vertical circling from above the right arm to above and behind the body, the right hand continues to circle the dart counterclockwise in a vertical circle on the right side of the body. Then move the left foot forward, turn the body 90 degrees right (facing north) and use the right hand to continue to circle a vertical circle counterclockwise in front of the body. Look ahead (Fig. 7-73).

Essential points: Moving the left foot forward and turning the body 90 degrees to the right should be coordinated closely with carrying the rope on the outer side of the right arm and with continued circling of the dart by the right hand.

8. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart moves counterclockwise from the front of the body to high on the right side of the body forming a vertical circle, bend the left arm and extend it forward to horizontal for the right hand to twine the rope dart once from the left arm down around the left elbow joint. Look at the left arm (Fig. 7-74A).

Essential points: Bend the left arm forward to horizontal and press it tightly against the upper arm so that the elbow joint faces forward and the right hand twines the dart once counterclockwise on the left upper side of the

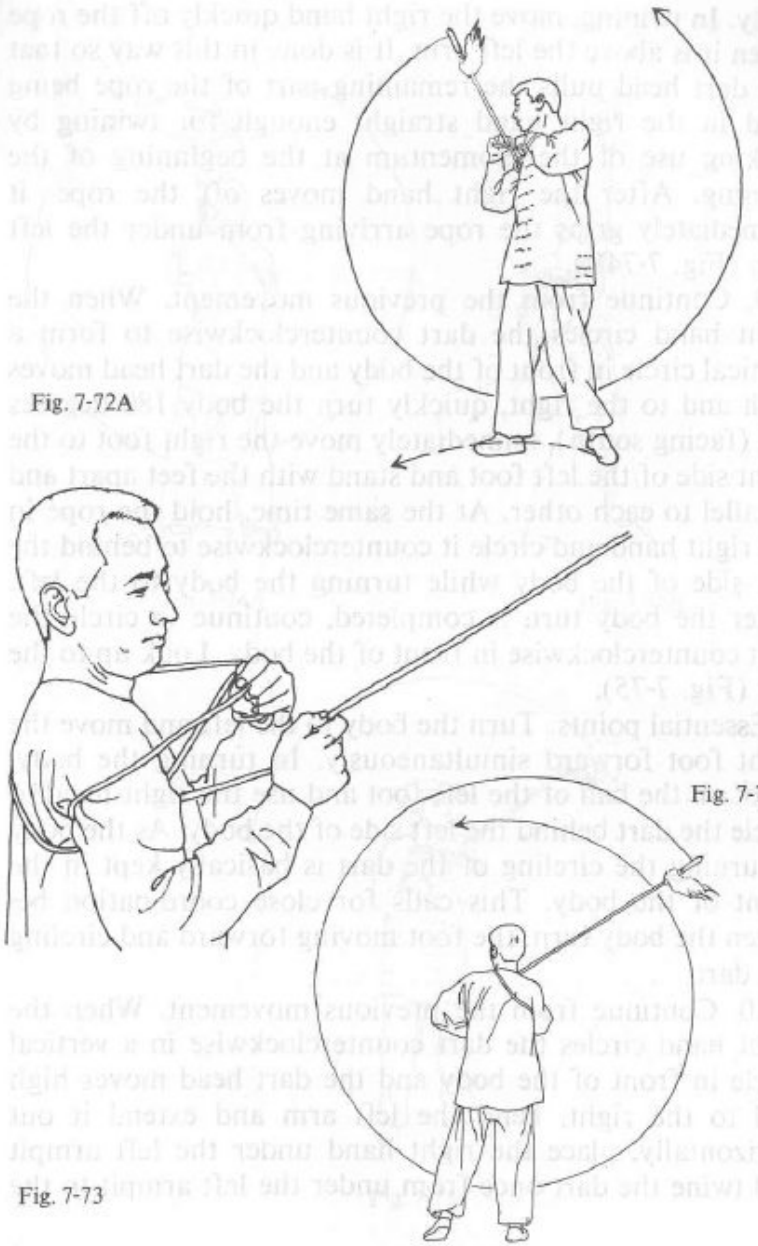


Fig. 7-72A

Fig. 7-72B

Fig. 7-73

body. In twining, move the right hand quickly off the rope when it is above the left arm. It is done in this way so that the dart head pulls the remaining part of the rope being held in the right hand straight enough for twining by making use of the momentum at the beginning of the twining. After the right hand moves off the rope, it immediately grips the rope arriving from under the left arm (Fig. 7-74B).

9. Continue from the previous movement. When the right hand circles the dart counterclockwise to form a vertical circle in front of the body and the dart head moves high and to the right, quickly turn the body 180 degrees left (facing south), immediately move the right foot to the right side of the left foot and stand with the feet apart and parallel to each other. At the same time, hold the rope in the right hand and circle it counterclockwise to behind the left side of the body while turning the body to the left. After the body turn is completed, continue to circle the dart counterclockwise in front of the body. Look up to the left (Fig. 7-75).

Essential points: Turn the body to the left and move the right foot forward simultaneously. In turning the body, pivot on the ball of the left foot and use the right hand to circle the dart behind the left side of the body. As the body is turning the circling of the dart is basically kept in the front of the body. This calls for close coordination between the body turn, the foot moving forward and circling the dart.

10. Continue from the previous movement. When the right hand circles the dart counterclockwise in a vertical circle in front of the body and the dart head moves high and to the right, bend the left arm and extend it out horizontally, place the right hand under the left armpit and twine the dart once from under the left armpit to the

Fig. 7-74A

Fig. 7-74B

Fig. 7-75

neck. At the same time lower the head. Look down and ahead (Figs. 7-76A, B).

Essential points: When the right hand twines the dart from under the left armpit to the neck, extend the left arm slightly out for the right hand to move under the left armpit. Lean the head forward so that the muscles of the neck become tight to help the rope twine around it. The slight extension of the left arm outward and the leaning forward of the head should be coordinated with the twining of the dart by the right hand. There should be no pause in the process or it may cause injuries.

11. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope twines from the neck and the dart head is about to face the direction of the shot on the left side of the body, the fingers of the left hand and the right hand move off the rope simultaneously. At the same time, turn the torso to the upper left, move the right foot forward and sideways to beside the left foot and turn the body 90 degrees left (facing east) to shoot the dart. Look in the direction of the shot (Fig. 7-77).

Essential points: When shooting the dart, the turn of the trunk to the upper left leads into a body turn of 90 degrees left and to moving the right foot forward. The whole movement should be executed in order from high to low. As the twining movement prior to the dart shot is executed with the torso leaning forward and the head bent forward, the timing for the shot is decided mainly by the sense of the body parts. When the rope twines from under the left armpit across the back to the neck, the dart can be shot immediately as soon as the neck on the right side of the body feels the touch of the rope. This movement is more complicated. Beginners must pay attention to their safety and repeatedly understand the essential points of every movement. Make sure to grasp the timing for twin-

Fig. 7-76A

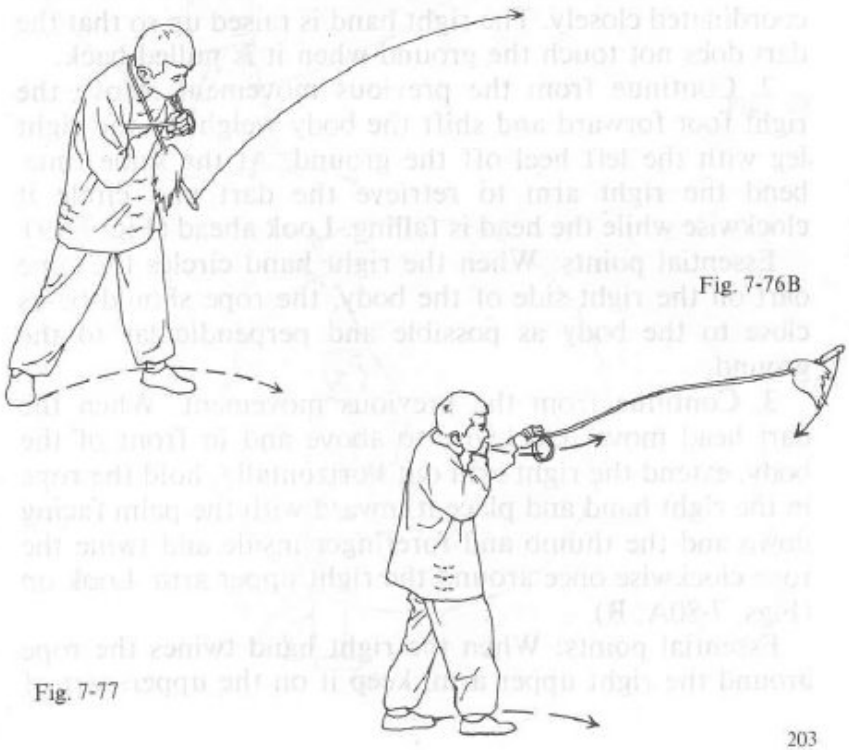


Fig. 7-76B

Fig. 7-77

ing and shooting. After the dart is shot, hold the dart handle in the left hand and send it forward to control the speed after the shot.

(Nine) Fairy Points to Road

1. Continue from the previous movement. The instant the rope becomes straight after the shot, bend the left arm and use the hand to pull back the dart stretching the right hand to grip the rope and raising it up quickly. At the same time move the left foot forward, toe on the ground. Look at the dart head (Fig. 7-78).

Essential points: Pulling the dart back with the left hand, gripping the rope with the right hand and raising the hand should be executed in a coordinated way. Moving the left foot and the movements of the hands should be coordinated closely. The right hand is raised up so that the dart does not touch the ground when it is pulled back.

2. Continue from the previous movement. Move the right foot forward and shift the body weight to the right leg with the left heel off the ground. At the same time, bend the right arm to retrieve the dart and circle it clockwise while the head is falling. Look ahead (Fig. 7-79).

Essential points: When the right hand circles the rope dart on the right side of the body, the rope should be as close to the body as possible and perpendicular to the ground.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart head moves clockwise to above and in front of the body, extend the right arm out horizontally, hold the rope in the right hand and place it inward with the palm facing down and the thumb and forefinger inside and twine the rope clockwise once around the right upper arm. Look up (Figs. 7-80A, B).

Essential points: When the right hand twines the rope around the right upper arm, keep it on the upper part of

the arm so that the dart can move around close to the body. It should be noted that the twining movement is executed around the upper arm, not around the elbow joint.

4. Continue from the previous movement. When the dart

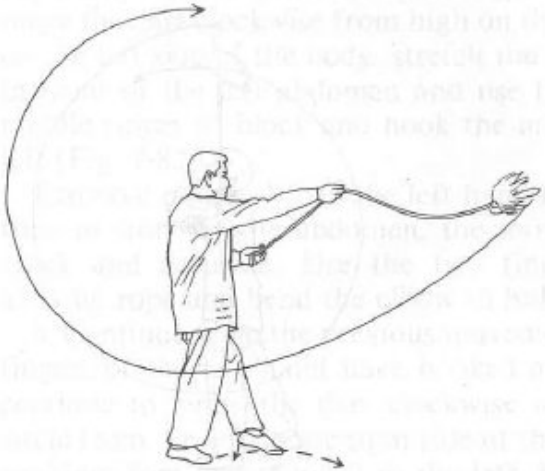


Fig. 7-78

Fig. 7-79

has twined around the right upper arm through one circuit and the dart head moves to above the body, turn the body 90 degrees left (facing north). At the same time, fold the right arm in while turning the body to the left to move the dart clockwise in front of the body from low on the right side to high on the left side. Look right (Fig. 7-81).

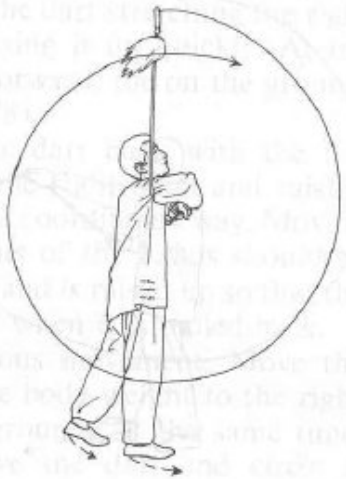


Fig. 7-80A

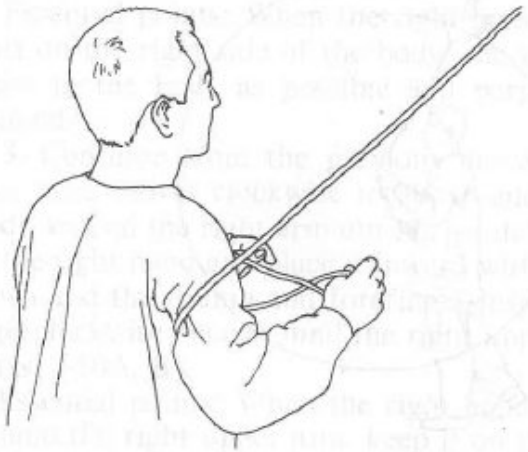


Fig. 7-80B

Essential points: The left body turn should take advantage of the clockwise motion of the dart. Keep the right upper arm straight when the arm bends against it to move the dart.

5. Continue from the previous movement. When the right arm bends in with the turn of the body to the left to move the dart clockwise from high on the right side to low on the left side of the body, stretch the left hand forward in front of the left abdomen and use the forefinger and middle finger to block and hook the arriving rope. Look left (Fig. 7-82A).

Essential points: When the left hand hooks the arriving rope in front of the abdomen, the movement should be quick and accurate. Use the two fingers to hook the arriving rope and bend the elbow to hold it (Fig. 7-82B).

6. Continue from the previous movement. When the two fingers of the left hand have hooked and held the rope, continue to circle the dart clockwise to form a vertical circle from the left to the right side of the body. First raise the right foot and swing it to the left. Press the left foot against the ground to jump left and land first on the right foot. Then land on the left foot and bend the leg to a full squat, straightening the right leg with the right toe turned in to form the right crouch step. Stretch the right hand to the right side of the body and use the forefinger and middle finger of the right hand to pinch the arriving rope. Look at the right hand (Figs. 7-83A, B).

Essential points: Forming the right crouch step on the left should be executed together with hooking the rope by the fingers of the left hand. The execution of the movements should be gentle, flexible and stable and should be coordinated with the clockwise circling of the rope. When the fingers of the right hand are used to receive the rope, keep the two fingers as wide apart as possible to sandwich

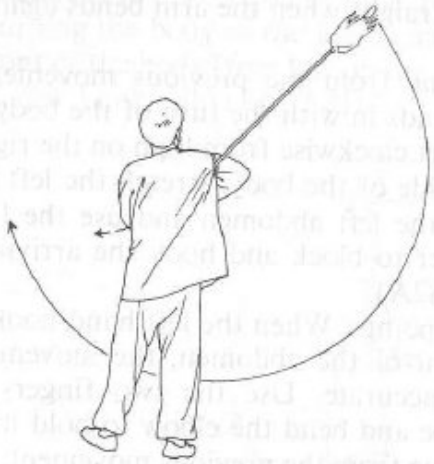


Fig. 7-81

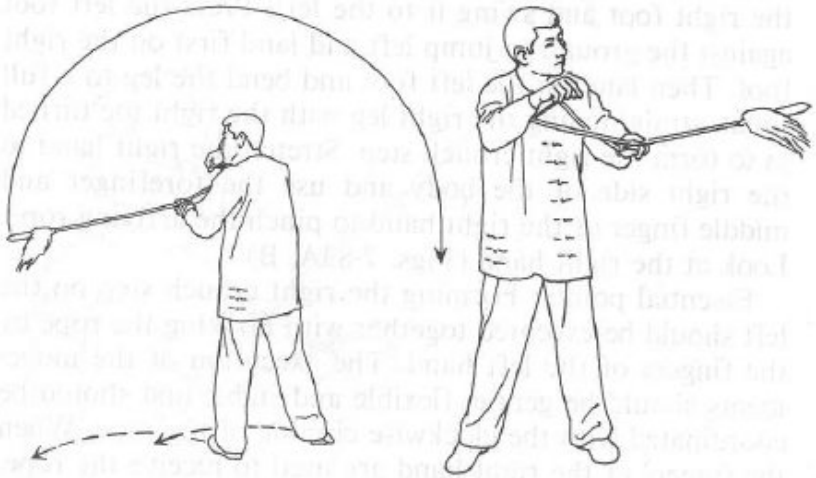


Fig. 7-82A Fig. 7-82B

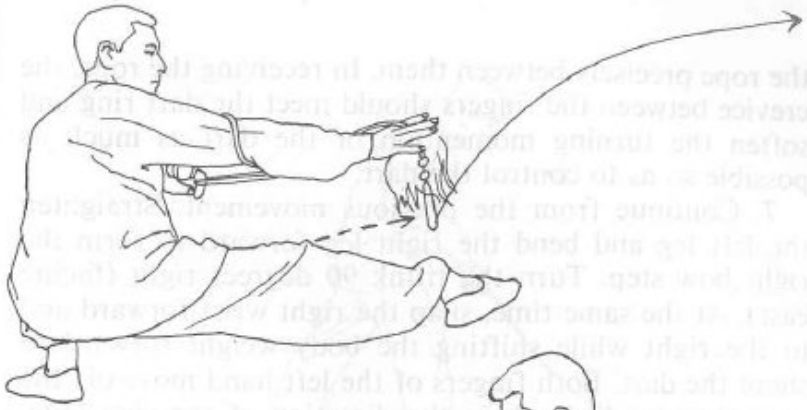


Fig. 7-83A

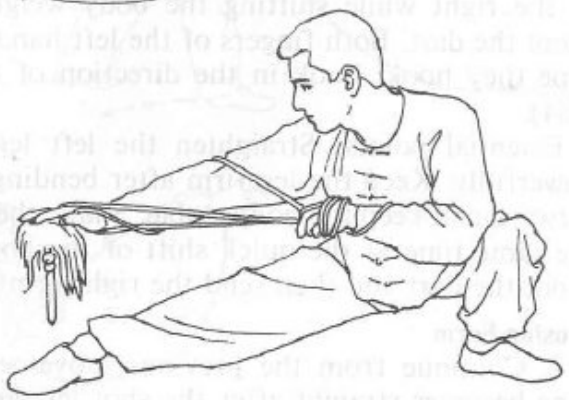


Fig. 7-83B

Fig. 7-84

the rope precisely between them. In receiving the rope, the crevice between the fingers should meet the dart ring and soften the turning momentum of the dart as much as possible so as to control the dart.

7. Continue from the previous movement. Straighten the left leg and bend the right leg forward to form the right bow step. Turn the trunk 90 degrees right (facing east). At the same time, snap the right wrist forward and to the right while shifting the body weight forward to shoot the dart. Both fingers of the left hand move off the rope they hook. Look in the direction of the shot (Fig. 7-84).

Essential points: Straighten the left leg quickly and powerfully. Keep the leg firm after bending the right leg forward and keep the body stable. Shake the right hand at the same time as the quick shift of the body forward to shoot the dart and then send the right arm forward.

Closing Form

1. Continue from the previous movement. When the rope becomes straight after the shot let the dart drop to the ground naturally. At the same time, lean the torso forward and put the right hand above the right knee. Look at the dart head (Fig. 7-85).

2. Continue from the previous movement. After the dart head drops to the ground, raise the right foot and move it back. At the same time press the left foot against the ground and jump backward. The left hand holds the handle and swings it back to pull the dart head so that the head bounces back centripetally. Look at the dart head (Fig. 7-86).

Essential points: When jumping backward, press the left foot against the ground and simultaneously move the right foot for a toe-out step. When the left hand pulls back the rope dart, apply force first on the dart head. Only in this

Fig. 7-85

Fig. 7-86

Fig. 7-87

way can the dart head bounce back centripetally. However, special efforts should be made to control it well so it does not hurt the player.

3. Continue from the previous movement. When the head bounces back, stretch the left hand to grip it and place it in front of the abdomen. At the same time, after jumping backward with both feet stand with the right foot in front of the left foot with the right leg bending slightly. Look at the dart head holding in the left hand (Fig. 7-87).

Essential points: The jump and the gripping of the dart head by the left hand should be harmoniously executed. Grip the dart head at the proper time and with decision.

4. Continue from the previous movement. After the left hand grips the dart head, move the left foot across the right foot, press the right foot against the ground to jump and turn the body 450 degrees right (facing south). Keep the right foot firm on the ground after the body turn and stand with the left foot in front of the right foot and toes on the ground. Extend the right arm straight to the right, fingers pointing up with the force point at the base of the palm. At the same time, use the left hand to move the dart, sweeping horizontally from left to right. After sweeping horizontally through one circuit, the rope will be tied around the waist. Use the thumb and forefinger of the left hand to hold the rope at the waist. Look ahead to the left (Fig. 7-88).

Essential points: Jump and turn the body 450 degrees and sweep horizontally at the same time. After the body turn, keep the body weight stable. Do not swing the body.

5. Continue from the previous movement. Shift the body weight forward to the left foot keeping the left foot firm on the ground, move the right foot forward and stand

Fig. 7-88

Fig. 7-89

with feet together. At the same time, drop the right hand to the right side of the body. Look ahead (Fig. 7-89).

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